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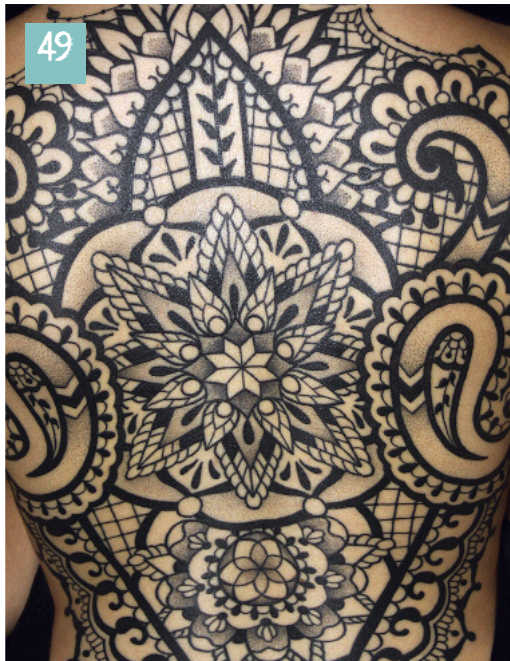
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Cover Model - Luna Marie

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Images must be high resolution (300) and sized at 100mm by 150mm. The disc needs to be labelled with the artist & studio name. Or email them to gallery@totaltattoo.co.uk

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All winners will be picked at random (or on merit if applicable) after the closing date. Entries received after the closing date will not be considered. The editor's decision is final. Only one entry per person please, and remember to include your name and address. Winners of convention tickets will be responsible for their own transport and accommodation unless stated otherwise. Total Tattoo is not responsible for items lost or damaged in transit - though of course we will try to help if we can.

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WELCOME to 135

Guest Editorial by Lizzy

It starts in September... but only gradually, with such small changes that you barely notice it at first. It plays with your mind. As you walk round the supermarket, you start thinking 'Mince pies were available throughout the year, weren't they?' Then there's the Facebook Friend (you know the one; you met them once, about three years ago). Amidst their pictures of motivational quotes, they suddenly post a status which reads: 'Got my shopping done! #100sleepstilsanta'.

And then, only when the rotting carcasses of pumpkins are thrown into the bins... Bam! The Christmas Ninja strikes. Glitter, glitter everywhere! People waiting for shops to open, as if they're extras from a zombie film, suddenly spring into life when they angrily wrestle the last size medium Christmas jumper from each other. Your budget brand of deodorant is boxed up in packaging, and with the addition of a paltry bow - or worse, a pink shower pouffe - is marketed as a Christmas gift set, 'Perfect for that special someone'.

This assault on the senses leads to The Big Day, when we will give and receive stuff; gorge ourselves on more vegetables than we've ever eaten, not to mention the rancid paste that is bread sauce; drink as many liqueurs and glasses of bubbly as possible; then, and only then, can we fall asleep on the sofa, in front of a BBC special.

In case you haven't guessed, I'm not a fan of Christmas. I do, however, like to reflect as one year draws to a close and another one begins. At Christmas, we often find ourselves thinking of those less fortunate than ourselves, whether because the media influences us to do so or because of the aforementioned alcohol. (It's my 30th birthday this year so I have been thinking about life, the universe and everything, or maybe I'm having some sort of midlife crisis. I'm not sure.) Since working 'behind the scenes' of this magazine, I've been astounded by how generous the tattoo industry has been to those in need during 2015. At the beginning of the year, we saw Higgins and Co organise auctions and tattoo sessions to raise money for those affected by the devastating earthquake in Nepal. Cock-A-Snook raised not only money for charity with their tattooing event, but also awareness of mental health issues. Painted Lady Tattoo Parlour donated to a local hospice. And Tattoo Art gave their takings to help clothe refugees... It's also worth noting how generous the tattoo community is to its own, giving money to fellow tattooists who have had major setbacks or illnesses. The incredible fundraising for Xed Lehead is a great example of this.

It would be impossible for me to name every charity tattoo event that has been held this year and the ones I've mentioned are only the tip of the iceberg. Nobody asked these people to organise these events, yet they did. If you took part or donated, whether artist or client, you showed compassion. I'll raise a glass to that.

And a final thought: If you're stuck for ideas and wondering what on earth to buy for Christmas presents this year, why not see if your favourite tattooist has any prints for sale? You can't go wrong with art. And of course there's always a Total Tattoo subscription or one of our cool new limited edition baseball shirts.



From all of us at Total Tattoo...
Bah, humbug and see you in 2016!

Lizzy

**'We make a living by what we get,
but we make a life by what we give.'**
Winston Churchill

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NEWS & REVIEWS

Tattoo news and reviews for your delectation and delight. If it goes on in the tattoo world, it goes in here. Send us your news items, books or products for review and items of general curiosity and intrigue for the tattoo cognoscenti.

News, Total Tattoo Magazine, 111 Furze Road, Norwich, Norfolk, NR7 0AU

BOOK REVIEW

Tattoo Masters

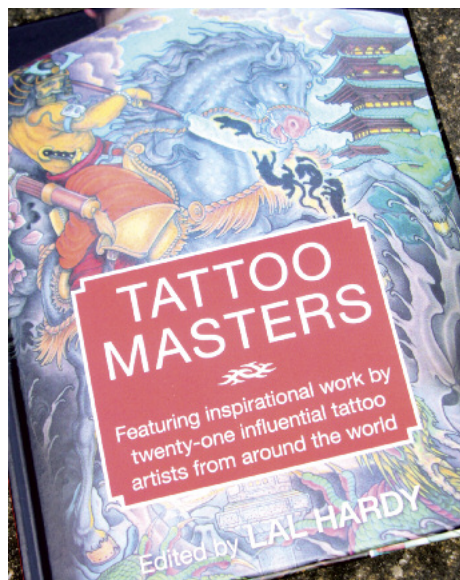
Lal Hardy

123 pages

Hardcover

£14.99, available from

www.mombooks.com



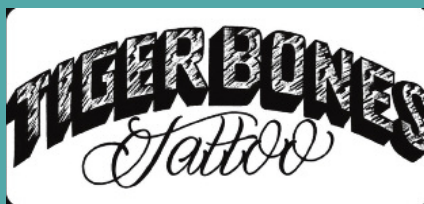
The standard of tattooing today is better than it's ever been, so selecting just a handful of artists for this book – twenty one to be precise – couldn't have been easy. But what a great choice Lal has made! A wide variety of styles are represented, as well as a refreshing range of experience; the legendary names are here (Filip Leu for instance) and also a number of practitioners who are relatively new to the trade but equally deserving of recognition. Every tattooist is given a short yet informative biography and a comprehensive five-page



portfolio. This is a visually stunning book, noteworthy for its attention to detail and its sympathetic presentation of each artist's work. It reads well too. As an in-depth guide to some of the most exciting and talented artists currently working around the world, at £14.99 it's an affordable must-have for any tattoo enthusiast.



NEW STUDIO



After thirteen years of tattooing (eight of those at Magnum Opus), Adrian Willard is opening his very own Tiger Bones Tattoo in central Brighton. He'll be at Magnum Opus until 22nd December, where he still has a few appointments available, then Tiger Bones will open on 2nd January 2016. He's already taking bookings via adrianwillardtattoo@gmail.com or tigerbonestattoo@gmail.com. There's a second work station available at Tiger Bones, so anyone interested in guesting or working full time should get in touch with Adrian.

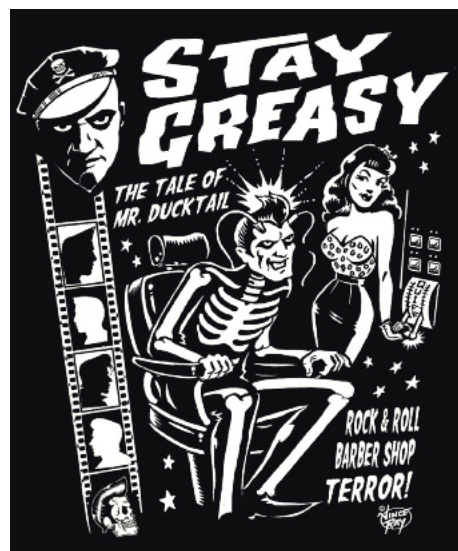
STAY GREASY



The feature length documentary *Stay Greasy* tells the story of rockabilly barbershop and 1950s beauty parlour It's Something Hell's, located on London's famous Carnaby Street.



The film makers wanted to tell the customers' stories, and the story of London's rock 'n' roll scene in general. Co-director Jonathan Lowe told Total Tattoo "The film was shot during 2011-2013, with just a two-person crew. Myself and Melanie Malherbe were already customers at the time and we shared a common desire to document the shop's existence, because it was under constant threat of closure. Inevitably our lives and jobs got in the way, but thanks to William and Vanetia's patience, here we are five years later with a finished film." It's free to watch at <https://vimeo.com/jclfilm/staygreasy>



R.I.P. SCOTT MARSHALL 1973-2015



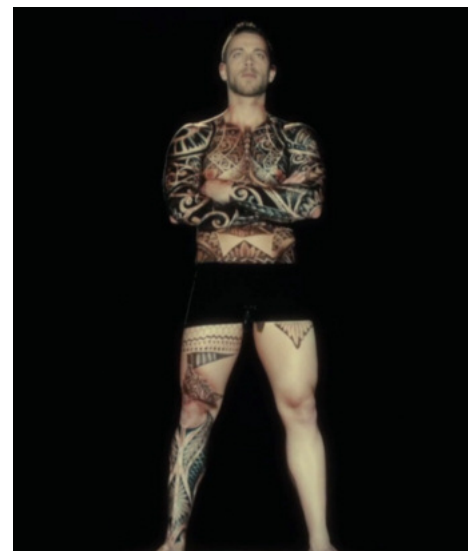
We were very sad to hear about the recent passing of Scott Marshall. Fans of TV show Ink Master will know him as the season four winner, but the off-screen Scott was so much more – a joker, a trusted artist and colleague, and a much-loved husband and father. After the initial announcement of Scott's death, a more personal account of the reason behind his passing was released by his friend Marc Lescarbeau, with the permission of Scott's family. Here is a segment: "Scott did whatever was needed in an effort to take better care of his clients, friends, and most importantly his family. Most saw him as being hilariously funny, and he usually kept everyone around him endlessly entertained. I now believe that this was because he did not want anyone that he knew to feel the kind of pain that he felt inside on a regular basis, only to feel joy. The people that really knew Scott knew how hard he has always been on himself. He was never satisfied, overly critical of himself, and plagued with the guilt that he felt over the smallest mistakes that he may have made in his life. I now know that he actually suffered from depression, and has for a good number of years. I also can now see that the over-indulgence was not for enjoyment or a lack of self control. It was simply to self-medicate for this disease he had that I was not aware of. I just spent some quality time with his family, friends and the community in which he lived. I met some really amazing people that surrounded him every day from all walks of life. Everyone was just as impressed with Scott as I was from the first day that I met him. He had the ability to connect with just about anyone and was very sincere in his interactions with everyone." Scott left behind a wife and three young children and, as is the way of the tattoo community, people have already rallied round to help them through this difficult time. Steadfast have released a t-shirt that Scott designed for them, and prints and artwork are available with all proceeds going to the family. You can also go to www.gofundme.com/ur7bbpmc to give directly.

INK MAPPING



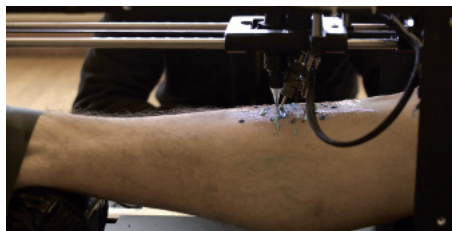
When it comes to skin mapping, Portuguese artists Oskar & Gasper lead the way. At a recent live event in Lisbon they turned their attention to tattooing with spectacular results. The models' tattoos came to life in awesome fashion, perfectly reflecting the work's personality and mood. The event was filmed, and other than editing and a soundtrack no post-production was used. It's uber cool. You really need to watch this!

<https://vimeo.com/143296099>



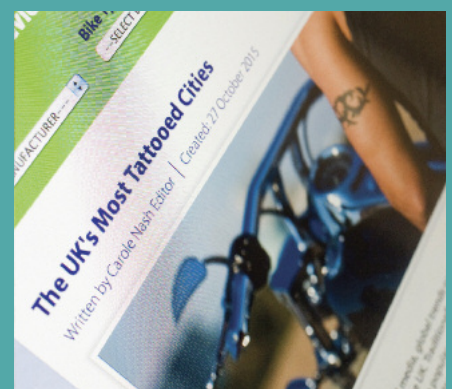
TATTOOING BY ROBOT

It was inevitable, and finally the day has come. We have a robot that can tattoo. Actually that's a bit of exaggeration. The real story is that French design studio Appropriate Audiences has modified a 3D printer to do the dastardly deed. The main problem faced by the boffins was the constant adjustment needed to follow the curvature of the body, and they solved this with an ingenious contour-tracing sensor. It's an ongoing project and the tattoos are becoming more and more sophisticated, but having watched the machine at work we have to ask ourselves... Why? You can make your own minds up by taking a look at <https://vimeo.com/143370783>



THE TOP TEN

Motorcycle insurer Carole Nash has conducted a nationwide survey to find out which are the most tattooed cities in the UK. Birmingham came out on top, with 48% of survey respondents saying they had six or more tattoos. In second place was Norwich (where 41% answered yes to that question), closely followed by Glasgow, Sheffield and Bradford. The other top ten tattoo cities were Aberdeen, Liverpool, Cardiff, Nottingham and Bristol. And what about tattoo designs and styles? It seems that each city has its own favourite genre. London leans towards the geometric, Aberdeen goes for Polynesian/Maori, Leeds is in love with tribal, and Liverpool is apparently the place where you will see the most memorial tattoos. Brummies choose a lot of horror imagery, and if you enjoy big flower tattoos then Cardiff is apparently the city for you. To find out more about the survey, head to www.carolenash.com/insidebikes/news-and-reviews/1557-tattooed-cities Make of the results what you will!



PETER MUI AUCTION

In November, one of the world's largest collections of original tattoo art went under the hammer. The collection was that of the late Peter Mui and contained original work by some of the most influential artists of the last fifty years including Bob Roberts, Guy Aitchison, Filip Leu, Leo Zulueta, Thomas Hooper and Horiyoshi III. Peter Mui was, amongst other things, a designer who founded a number of tattoo clothing labels including YellowMan and Samurai Surfer. Many of the pieces of "wearable art" in this collection were commissioned by him for these brands. He was massive advocate for the talent that exists within tattooing as well as a shrewd businessman, and it would appear that the return on his initial investment is going to be considerable.



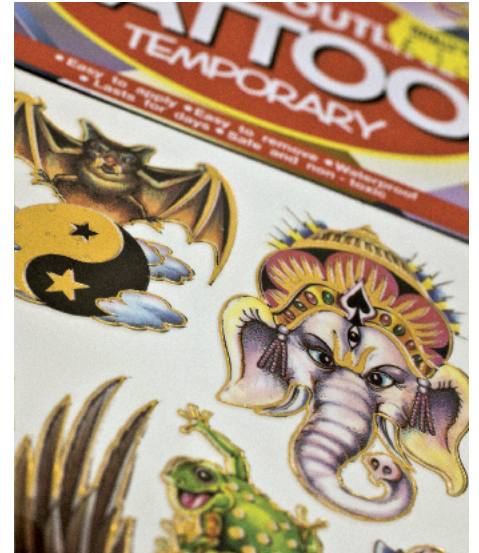
ARTIST WANTED

Songbird Tattoo in Exeter is looking for another tattooist to join their team as lovely Hannah is moving on to London soon. They're looking for someone really special, whose style complements but differs from those that already on offer. The right person will have their own client base, and references. No drink, drug or drama issues. Please email links to your work and a brief bio to Nic Smith at songbirdtattoo@live.co.uk



TRY BEFORE YOU BUY

Not sure if you're choosing the right tattoo? Maybe it's a bit too big? Or the wrong colour? And what will everybody else think of it? These are the sorts of questions that go through the minds of people who probably shouldn't be getting tattooed just yet (Golden Rule Number 1: You've got to want it!) but Canadian company Momentary Ink have come up with the ultimate pontification aid: a transfer of your chosen design. So, if you really want to test drive your tattoo design before you commit to the real thing, head to www.momentaryink.com



KILLER CALENDAR

Tattoo supply company Killer Ink have teamed up with Total Tattoo magazine to feature many of our cover models in a FREE calendar to be sent out with all new orders throughout the Christmas and New Year period while stocks last. www.killerink.co.uk



XED LE HEAD PRINTS FOR SALE

Following our recent features on Xed Lehead's mind-blowing art, and his recent enforced retirement from tattooing due to health issues (Total Tattoo Issues 132 and 133), we are happy to announce that Xed has now set up a website to sell his unique one-off prints. Each one is totally original and no two will be the same. Check them out at www.xedlehead.me



TOTAL TATTOO T-SHIRTS FOR CHRISTMAS

It's been a while, but we thought it was time to crank out a new Total Tattoo garment. We've chosen a baseball-style shirt, and the artists we've collaborated with have done an outstanding job. The front of the shirt has been designed by Duncan X, the back by Sam Ricketts. They are on sale now via www.totaltattoo.co.uk priced £20



DAVE KOENIG WORKSHOP

Here at Total Tattoo we are long-time fans of Dave Koenig. The flowing lines of his beautifully constructed tattoos and illustrations make his work irresistible to the eye. Ryan Moon has condensed an 8-hour workshop with Dave into a 2-hour video entitled *Swallow My Pride* that can be downloaded or streamed at any time for £25.00. Follow the link for more details: <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/davekoenig/135701433>



WISE UP YOUR WORDS

If you are thinking about having your favourite quotation or song lyrics tattooed on you, take a few moments to watch this little animated film. It's a witty reminder that all may not be what it seems with those words that will be on your body for all eternity. www.vimeo.com/120890652

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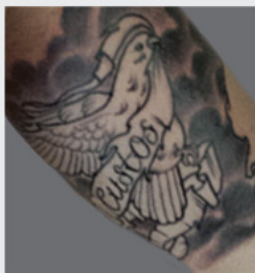
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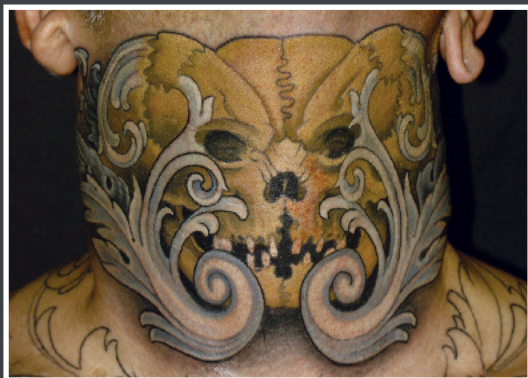


Sailor Bit is quite simply one of the finest exponents of Japanese interpretive tattoos working today. Bit hails from the hotbed of tattooing that is Switzerland and, when you study his work, it's easy to see the influence of another Swiss master, Filip Leu. But more of that later. Bit is what I would call a big tattoo specialist; that's not to say he doesn't do smaller pieces of work, but you can see from the images on these pages where his true love lies. During the interview we talked about working on these very large, very time-consuming pieces, but first I felt it only right and proper to find out a bit about Sailor Bit himself...

Interview by
James Sandercock
Pictures by Sailor Bit



Bit's father was a marine biologist and his mum was a painter, an art teacher and something of a hippy, according to Bit. As a boy he spent most of his summers by the sea in the south of France, where his father would study and teach because as Bit points out "There are no oceans in Switzerland." He would spend his days out at sea with his father, joining in with the lessons and learning everything the students did. His mother encouraged him to explore the artistic side of his personality too. The family also spent time together in Africa so travelling was, and still very much is, in Bit's blood.



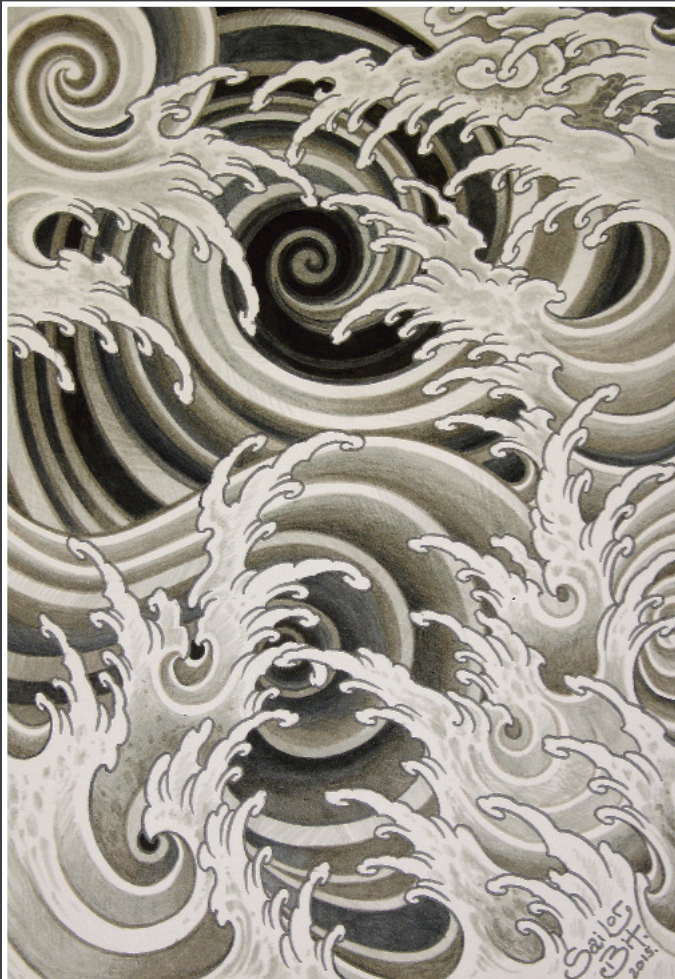
So it's clear to see where Bit's love of the sea, art and travel comes from. The connection with tattooing is not so obvious but, like many children, he saw tattoos on the silver screen and of course on the old seafarers he met through his father. They would always have a story to tell. "I was really fascinated by their tattoos so I started to draw in that style, or at least I tried to," Bit told me. Then one of his father's friends, who had travelled to the US and knew he was interested in tattoos, brought him back a tattoo magazine. "When I saw that I was blown away. There were a lot of English guys in it. I remember Ian of Reading's gorilla



backpiece. Felix Leu and Ed Hardy were in it too. I was only about 14 years old but I knew that this was what I wanted to do."

It was not until Bit was 18 that he managed to get hold of a machine and start to learn tattooing. Many parents might have been alarmed by this but Bit's mum and dad liked the fact that he had found something that he was passionate about. "My first attempt was on pig skin. I did some skulls and stuff then my mother made it into a soup!"

Like many young tattooists, once he started working on customers he did anything and everything. But Bit was lucky make that incredibly lucky because he was from the city of Lausanne, home of the Family Leu. Bit explained "I went to see Felix and Filip many times. Filip is only two years older than me. They always welcomed me with great kindness and generosity and they really motivated me."

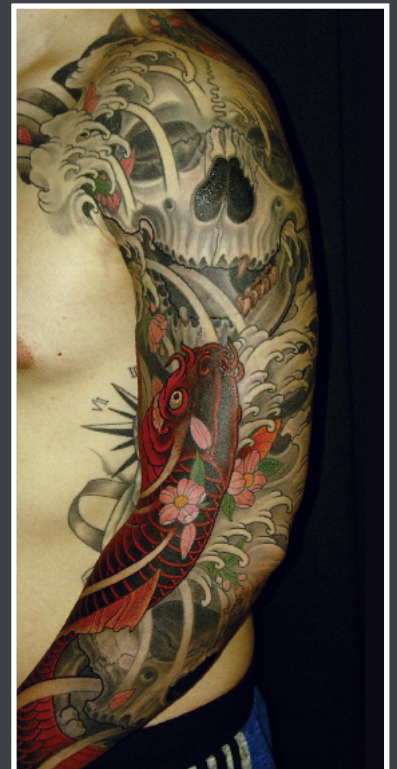
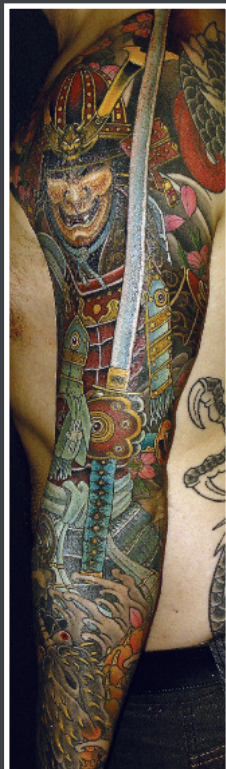




"Some customers around Lausanne wanted large scale tattoos like those done by the best tattoo artists, but they wanted it cheaper [*he laughs*] so I started to do that style. In some ways it was hard being in the same city as Filip but he is a very special person. Many tattooists will try to destroy you when you start tattooing. They tell you to get the fuck out of their shop. It was never like that with Felix and Filip; they would always help me and push me to get better at it. They didn't fear the competition."

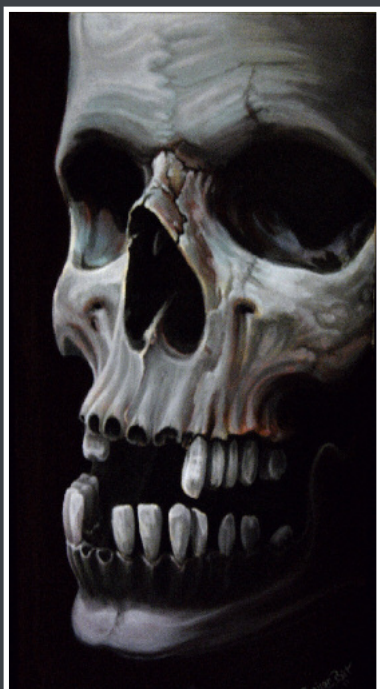
Bit's love for large-scale work has grown over time and he has developed and refined his own style. "I'm very lucky to have such lovely clients who let me do this type of work. Nowadays I only do the tattoos I want to do and it's been this way for maybe 10 or 15 years." That may sound like a long time but you have to remember how long it can take to produce work on this scale. "I have just finished a bodysuit that took two and half years, which is actually pretty quick. I have some on the go that I started 10 years ago. It's difficult because when I finish, the design is ten years old; the first line I did is ten years old and the last one is ten minutes old. You have to wait a long time for the satisfaction of finishing a piece."

There is a flipside to this long, often drawn-out process, as Bit explained. "People say to me on Facebook 'What's happened? Have you stopped tattooing? You're not posting any new work.' But it's just that I haven't finished anything recently. It can be frustrating but once you are finished, it's a huge pleasure for both customer and artist. It happens when it happens. It's not a race."





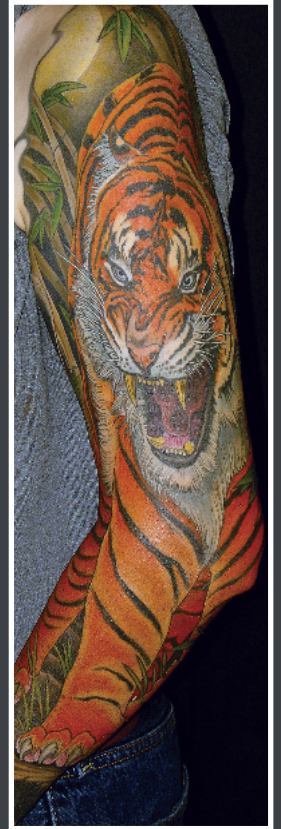
This seemed like a good time to find out how Bit unwinds and relaxes when he not working, which brought us back to his first loves the sea and sailing. "For me sailing restores my balance. Tattooing gives me great pleasure, but that doesn't last. This is why I need time on my boat. I don't even draw when I am on it. I did try at first but I realised that it didn't work. I just relax and that gives me new ideas because I can think freely. You need time to stop and think about what you're doing. If the weather is bad, that gets my adrenalin pumping, and I feel like a simple human being alone on the planet. I also need to move, to travel. If I couldn't do that I think my world would come crashing down." I wondered how his customers felt about Bit's long absences from the studio. "Before we start a project they know about it. I usually go away for two months then work for two months."





I wondered if Bit needed time to adjust back into his work routine when he comes home. "No, I love the transition. When I go from tattooing to sailing I am happy because one life is over and a new one is starting. When it's time to go back to tattooing, I am ready to go and highly motivated. If I tattooed all year long, I'm sure my motivation would go down."

One aspect of large scale and bodysuit tattooing that is endlessly fascinating is the way that an artist puts the whole design together. Bit described his methodology: "First I take pictures of the guy in different positions, then I print them out around A4 size. Once we have decided on what elements they want, I start to draw on the print-outs; just the major lines to create the movement I want. Then we talk about the details and I'll draw a small version of the completed design, to confirm with the client that this is what they want. After that I'll draw it full size but with not so much detail. This allows me to see the design from five or six metres away. I always try to make tattoos that you can see from far way. Some small details are good but the major subjects must be large and also look good when the tattoo is moving."





"I am just trying to bring my own 'something' to a very established style. The traditional way of doing Japanese tattoos has been around for a very long time and was created by some incredible artists. There is a reason for everything in Japanese tattooing. But sometimes you must take what the generations before you have done, and bring something new to it. Then the next generation must try and do the same."

Getting tattooed with a Japanese bodysuit is a huge commitment; it takes a long time, more than a little bit of money and a great many sittings. That means a lot of pain and requires a lot of patience. As Bit puts it "You're going to be Mr. Not Finished for maybe 10 years." During the long process the bond between artist and client can become strong, and friendships grow and develop. It's a transformational thing and a lot of people are not going to understand why you have done it. The responsibility an artist has in all of this is not lost on Bit. "It's important for a tattooist to be stable, as you don't want to fall out with your client part of the way through. Also you are responsible for what you are doing to this person and how it will change their life. If I'm not sure that a person can live with a tattoo, I won't do it, although of course you can never really know. I want people to have a nice life and enjoy the tattoo – so I have to be sure as I can be. When you have a tattoo you should feel stronger. Perhaps you never went to the swimming pool because you weren't happy with the way you looked but now you have your tattoo, it's 'Fuck you all!' It's one of the last tribal acts we have; it's about coming of age. Sadly people are now having tattoos to be the same as their friends; it's like a fashion. I don't think this results in a tattoo you will enjoy all your life." The bodysuit is perhaps the ultimate expression of the former; a tattoo that defines you, makes you stronger.



Our cover model this month is Luna Marie, a fiery redhead from America with an outstanding tattoo collection. Jenna Kraczek caught up with her to find out more...

Who is Luna Marie?

A quirky, red-headed, tattooed woman from Orlando, Florida.

How did you get into modelling? Did you do it prior to having tattoos?

I always loved the thought of it when I was younger, so when I got older I took acting and modelling classes. When I started getting tattooed at the age of 18 I was told I couldn't be a model if I had visible tattoos, but I wanted to prove them wrong. After two years of school, I created a Model Mayhem account which helped me make a basic portfolio and it's all history from there.

What advice would you give to models trying to make it in the tattoo industry?

Please be yourself. Keep it classy and don't let anyone hold you back from what you want to do. There will always be someone to say something negative or hurtful. Just brush those bad vibes right off your shoulder and keep your head and hopes high.

What is your favorite part about being a model in the tattoo industry?

Getting to travel and meet fun and interesting people such as other models, photographers, performers and even a few fans.

How old were you when you got your first tattoo and what was it?

I was 18 years old. It was a cupcake on my left butt cheek. There was no meaning behind this tattoo other than me thinking I had a sweet ass, so let's tattoo a cupcake on it. It has been covered up since.

Was there a defining moment when you knew you wanted to be heavily tattooed?

Once I had both of my half sleeves done I knew I wanted my back and my legs and my stomach and so on. I have always envied people that are brave enough to be fully tattooed and hoped I could achieve that one day.



How many hours have you put in to getting tattooed?

I get this question a lot and honestly I have no idea. If I were to take a stab at guessing I would say around 50 plus hours.

What area hurt the most to get tattooed?

The feet were the absolute worse. I don't want to scare anyone away from getting their feet tattooed but I had a very hard time sitting still while getting mine done.

Do you have a favourite tattoo?

The carousel horse on my left thigh. When I was younger my grandmother would always take me to a carousel. So every time I see one, it reminds me of her and my childhood.

Your work looks very cohesive. Was it done by various artists with the same style or just one artist?

Most of my work was done by Mike Lugo at Cast Iron Tattoos in Orlando. The rest is by

various artists such as Kiwi Matt, Matt Pearl and Stacy Martin Smith. Most, if not all, of my tattoos are traditional designs with a spin of teal and pink to make them more feminine. All of my designs were collaborations between me and the artist. I would simply give them an idea of what I wanted and they would put their own specific style into it.

Any plans for more ink in the future?

I would love to get the 'three pharaoh's horses' done on the back of my neck but I have heard that area is super painful so have been holding off until I feel mentally ready.

Have you experienced any negativity through being a heavily tattooed woman?

I do on occasion have random strangers grab my arm or caress my legs to see if my tattoos are real. Eye rolls and snickers while passing are also very normal on a day to day basis. Social media is where I receive the most negativity though, from internet bullies.

Is your family supportive of you being heavily tattooed?

They weren't at first, but once they realised that this is who I am they have learned to love it.

What does the future hold for Luna Marie? Any upcoming projects?

I plan on working with the Mertailor for an upcoming mermaid tail photo shoot, along with travelling to Vegas for a few photo shoots while attending my first Viva Las Vegas.

What should we know about Luna outside of your tattoos?

I have love taxidermy animals. I have several hanging on my walls along with an entire shelf filled with preserved wet specimens. This all comes from my love of animals and science. I am very easy to talk to and love meeting new people. I have over 15 pets, most of them are tarantulas. If you play any 90s pop song around me I am likely to burst out in song.

LUNA
COVER MODEL PROFILE



Interview and photos
by Jenna Kraczek

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HONG KONG TATTOO CONVENTION

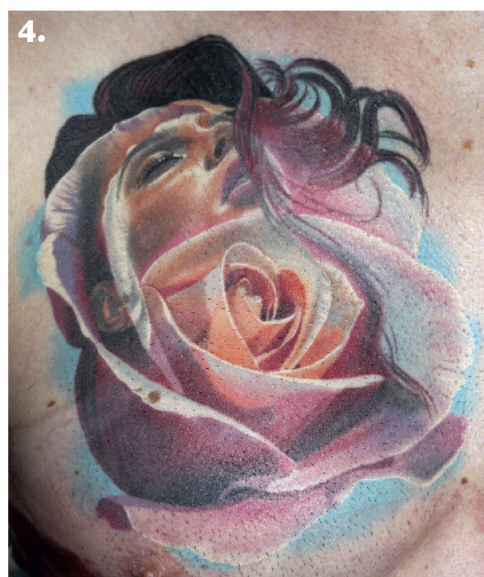
With the third Hong Kong Tattoo Convention, it seems that the Chinese tattoo scene has finally gone global. More and more foreign artists are now tattooing in Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong while, on the other side of the world, artists from Hong Kong and the rest of China are making a strong impression with their often spectacular and large-scale work. A new era has clearly begun.

The organisers of the Hong Kong Tattoo Convention – Gabe (Freedom Tattoo), Jay FC and Nelson Yuen – know exactly what they're doing. Theirs is now one of the most important shows in the Far East and it's a meeting point for everyone who wants to participate in the Chinese tattoo bonanza. Modern tattooing may be a relatively recent phenomenon here, but there's a wave of enthusiasm sweeping through all of China's major cities, with young and affluent tattoo fans prepared to pay high prices for their ink, especially if the artist is internationally known. And of course a huge proportion of all the tattoo equipment in use around the world today is manufactured in the People's Republic. As is common at Asian tattoo events, business dealings play a big at this convention.

This business-oriented approach is not for everybody, but it's certainly not all there is to the Hong Kong Tattoo Convention. Top artists such as Shige (Yellow Blaze), Robert Hernandez (Vitamin Tattoo) and Sabado are regular guests here, and there are many other hidden gems to be discovered among the booths as a number of admired and respected artists who don't often appear in public are now finding their way to this convention. True connoisseurs can enjoy watching Ichibay (Three Tides Tokyo) doing some finely detailed Japanese work, while

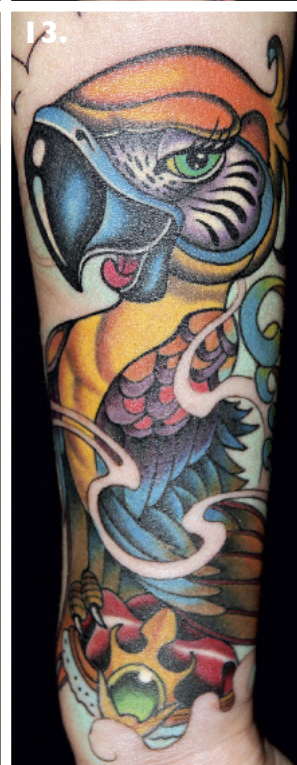


1. by tofi, ink-ognito (poland)
2. by davee blows, freedom tattoo (hong kong)
3. by jeff lew, jeff lew ts (malaysia)
4. by phil garcia, inkphiller (usa)





- 5. by jeff lau, william tattoo family (singapore)
- 6. by josh lin (taiwan)
- 7. by little dragon (china)
- 8,9,12 by bez, triplesix studio
- 10. by karol rybakowski, ink-ognito (poland)
- 11. by josh lin (taiwan)
- 13. by yueyu tattoo (china)



Bez puts some colourful ink into his client's arm, and script specialist Norm and his good friend Dan Sinnes from Luxembourg do their thing. And the Polish artists have made it to Hong Kong this year. Tofi, Karol Rybakowski, Davee Blows and Bartek Kos (Kult Tattoo) fit perfectly into this dynamic environment. There's some great work by local artists on show too. It's obvious that sheer quantity is gradually being replaced by true quality in the Chinese tattoo scene, which makes being here an absolute pleasure for the dedicated tattoo lover.

I had an interesting chat with Vincent Yiu, a Sofubi designer from Myth Toys, based in Hong Kong. Sofubi are dolls made from soft vinyl (which is where the name comes from) and they have recently become incredibly popular in Japan and America. Myth Toys were exhibiting customised Sofubi at the Hong Kong convention, featuring unique designs by renowned tattoo artists including Shige, Davee Blows, Gabe Shum and Tofi. Vincent told me, "Our idea was to introduce a range of collectables into the Hong Kong and Chinese marketplace, and also bring this audience a bit closer to Japanese history and culture. That's why we did a Samurai doll, to which we added tattoo designs. Sofubi are not toys, by the way, but an art medium – just like tattoos!" I wondered what was going to happen to the Sofubi after the show? "First, we will send them to touring exhibitions in Tokyo, Los Angeles and Taiwan, and after that they will be sold for charity.

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15.



16.



17.

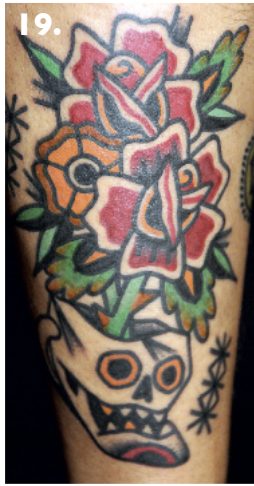


14. by ryuhon,
ym tattoo (korea)
15. by yueyu tattoo (china)
16. by reeve wong,
r tattoo (hong kong)
17. by norm,
norm will rise (usa)

18.



19.



20.



We are cooperating with celebrities who run their own foundations and charities, so we know where the money is going afterwards. One Sofubi, decorated by Gabe (organiser of the Hong Kong convention), we gave to our good friend David Beckham, who recently visited us in Hong Kong and Macau."

I also bumped into Niccku Hori from Galaxy 2 in Singapore. A tattoo artist of many years standing, he is an expert in Asian tattooing and a friend of many of the Japanese masters. He told me how tattooing in Hong Kong has changed in the past decade or two, from being an 'underground' activity in the backrooms of bars and restaurants, or in friend's houses, to the more professional scene that we see today. Niccku told me this trend echoes what happened in Singapore a few years previously, and in Thailand and mainland China too. As an economy develops, tattooing follows – that's his theory – and he added, "Hong Kong, like Singapore, has the huge advantage that English is widely spoken and people are used to Westerners and the Western mentality." And what did he think of the Hong Kong convention? "This is a top level event. Just like other global conventions, but with an Asian touch and on a smaller scale. Great artists, and competent professional organisers."

The guys in Hong Kong are doing so many things right, it's going to be exciting to see what the 2016 show will be like. It certainly won't be smaller, that's for sure!

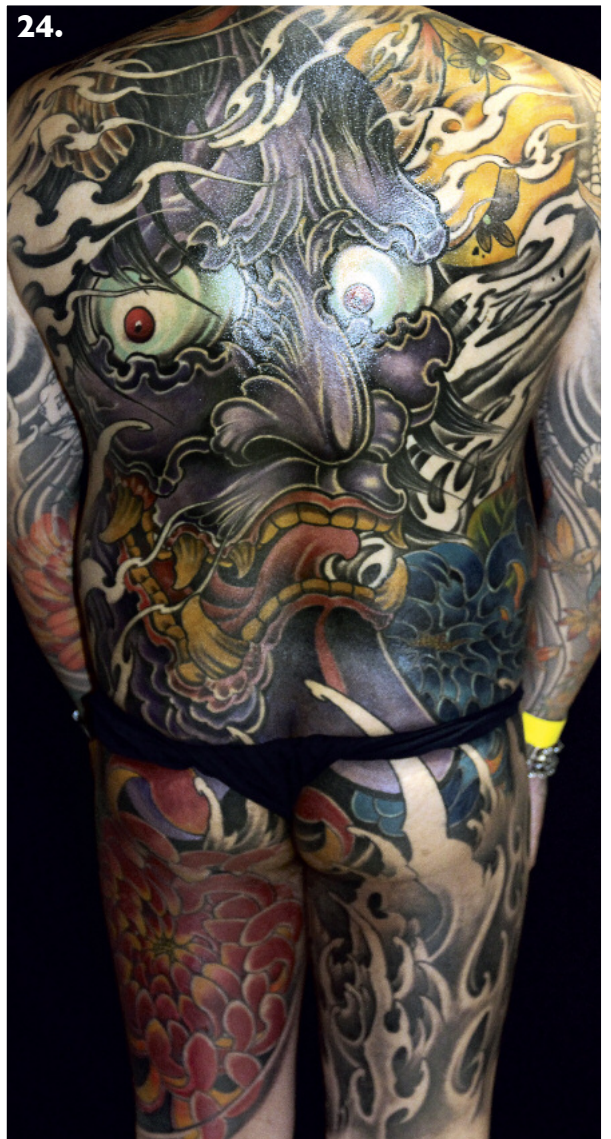
21.



22.



24.



23.



- 18. by eddie ko, sean ting (hong kong)
- 19. by en (japan)
- 20. by danaka, ym tattoo (korea)
- 21. norm getting tattooed by dan sinnes
- 22. by 76 tattoo (china)
- 23. trophies
- 24. by ki, lotus tattoo (hong kong)

25.



25. by yueyu tattoo (china)
 26. by hori chung (taiwan)
 27. by 76 tattoo (china)
 28. by maroo, ym tattoo (korea)
 29. by klaus fruhmann, hu tattoo (austria)
 30. by david, the circle tattoo

26.



27.



28.

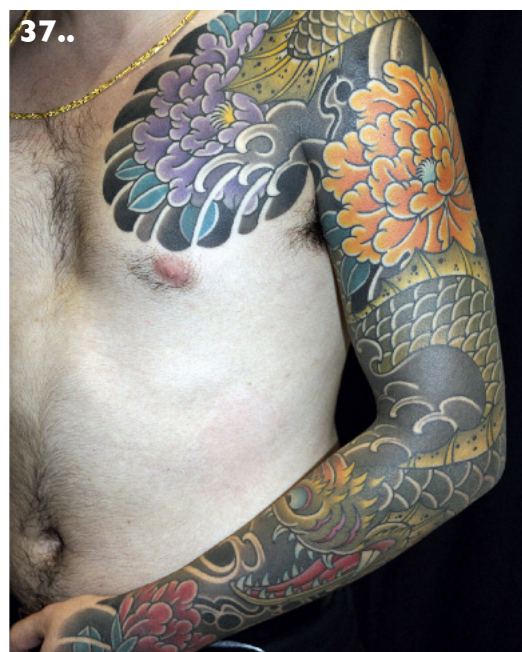


29.



30.





31. by different, thorn park tattoo (taiwan)
 32. vincent yiu's sofubi
 33. by mike boyd, the circle
 34. by jeff lau, william tattoo family (singapore)
 35. by danaka, ym tattoo (korea)
 36. by fabrice koch, fablnkognito (germany)
 37. by hori kasiwa (taiwan)



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PART TWO

ON THE ROAD WITH NICK WHYBROW



In this special mini-series we're travelling with tattooist Nick Whybrow as he bikes to guest spots around Europe. This month's instalment takes him to two very different studios – Giah in Switzerland and Erntezeit in Germany – via breathtaking mountain scenery and an unfortunate incident with his brand new waterproofs...

Hi everybody! Here I am picking up my diary where I left off last time, setting out from Rimini on the road to Milan. It was still pretty hot, although the weather wasn't as sunny as it had been. In fact the cloud cover made a nice change. But about 50 miles outside of Milan I ran into a storm and it chucked it down so hard I had to keep sheltering under bridges every few miles. I had no waterproofs and I got soaked through. When I arrived in Milan I was pretty grumpy, so after I'd checked into the hotel I ordered a takeaway pizza that turned out to be about the size of my entire torso, I sulked while I ate it, then went to bed. The weather improved the next day, but in case it turned moody again I went out and bought some ridiculously expensive new waterproofs (Milan is the fashion capital of Europe after all). For the first time on my trip I was feeling lonely and homesick and it wasn't the cheeriest start to the next part of my journey, but I was excited to be heading to Zurich and really looking forward to hanging out with my friend Jack Gallowtree.



Jack Gallowtree



First I should tell you about the ride into Switzerland. Heading north from Milan you could see huge hills in the distance and behind them mountains that were so enormous their peaks were covered in cloud. I'm not exactly sure where Italy stopped and Switzerland started but I assume it was somewhere near these mountains. This ride was stunningly beautiful. The road took long sweeping curves round steep slopes covered in lush pine forests, with small villages scattered right up as high as the cloud cover would allow me to see. I rode past crystal clear lakes, with icy mountain streams tumbling down by the side of the road, and I spent a lot of time exclaiming holy shit to myself in my crash helmet as I tried to take it all in. Even the occasional burst of rain couldn't dampen my spirits, and as I stopped for fuel the clouds were clearing enough for me to see the snow-capped peaks.

Now I'm not sure if it was my looking in awe at the mountains or just a lack of thought that caused it, but when I rode into the petrol station and pulled up at the pump in I accidentally let my brand new ridiculously expensive Milanese waterproofs touch the exhaust pipe, melting a couple of nice little holes in the right leg. I'd worn those waterproofs for perhaps an hour at most. And already I'd ruined them. I had a little huff to myself about this, repaired the holes using trusty gaffer tape, and went on my way feeling a bit of a fool.



by Nick Whybrow

Arriving in Zurich, I checked into my hotel and freshened myself up, then went straight to Giahi to see my friend Jack Gallowtree. I'd first met Jack a few years ago when he was guesting at Jayne Doe, and I was really looking forward to seeing a familiar face.

Giahi is like no other tattoo shop I've ever worked in. It looks a lot more like the inside of a health spa or a beauty clinic. There was no flash on the stark white walls; instead there was an occasional peculiarly shaped piece of wood and some huge canvasses with images of people eating strawberries while pretending to be tattooed. I must admit it wasn't my idea of how a tattoo shop should look, but when I got to Jack's room it all felt familiar again because he'd covered the walls in flash, paintings and outlines of his work. He was just finishing up a tattoo, so it was perfect timing to have a nice catch-up chat – during which I learned a lot more about Giahi as a business. I already knew there was more than one studio because when I was arranging the guest spot I found out I was due to be working in a different part of town to the shop that Jack was in and I'd asked to be moved so that I could work alongside him. Jack told me that Giahi actually has four shops in Zurich and one in nearby Winterthur. I also found out that the owners don't tattoo. Now I'm not a big fan of shops that are set up like this, but I figured I'd keep an open mind and see how things went.

my Giahi workstation



I had some time to explore Zurich (and get a haircut and beard trim) before starting work at Giahi a couple of days later. I was shown to my room, and I was about to sit down and set up my machines when I noticed that the only two chairs were a wicker armchair and something that looked like it belonged next to a dining table. I asked about getting a rolling chair like almost all tattooists use, but was told Giahi didn't have enough to go round and I would have to use what was provided. I decided to use the wicker armchair for myself, figuring that the dining chair would be easier to clean properly after each customer. Not ideal, but sometimes you have to work with what you've got. Having set up my machines, I realised there wasn't an armrest either. El in the next door room lent me hers for the day as she didn't need it. I'll be honest, this lack of equipment annoyed me somewhat – especially since Giahi, of all the guest spots on this tour, was taking the highest percentage of the money I earned. Add to this the fact that they apparently made no attempt to publicise me being there, and you can see why I ended up feeling there was a lot more give than take in this situation. But I tried to ignore this and just get on with the job in hand.

My clients Amedeo and Kate were booked in for the day and they were both getting work I was looking forward to doing. Amedeo decided to go first and the next few hours flew by as I tattooed a bear wearing a sailor's hat on his arm. Then I cleaned down and set up for Kate. This was to be her first tattoo so she was quite nervous, but she settled in really quickly and a few hours later her Victorian-style lady's head with musical instruments coming out of the top was complete. But unfortunately there isn't a photo, so you'll just have to imagine it!



During the next couple of days I found out more about how Giahi operates. Not only do they not provide the correct equipment, but they also charge you for all your supplies. They give you a 'start-up kit' of petroleum jelly, disinfectant, gloves and paper towels, then when you run out they make you pay for more. The supplies cupboard is kept locked and only certain members of staff have keys. To be taking such a high percentage then charging for supplies on top of that is, to be perfectly frank, is an absolute piss take in my view. The money the tattooist pays the owners should go towards these supplies. They should be available to use as needed. Almost everybody told me they hate how the shop is run. Most of the tattooers seemed to have a feeling of 'us versus them' with the shop owners. That's not to say that good work isn't coming out of Giahi. In fact there's a great deal of excellent work coming out of there. But in my opinion it's all down to the tattooers, not the owners. However, despite everything, everyone was extremely friendly and helpful.

Munich Rathaus



by Nick Whybrow



On my last day at Giahi – my last day in my uncomfortable wicker chair – I managed to sweet talk one of the disgruntled staff who had a key into giving me some more gloves and paper towels for free from the supplies cupboard. When my client Vanessa arrived she was very late because she'd mistakenly gone to one of the other Giahi shops across town, but that wasn't too much of a problem because we had all day. I put the stencil of a crow and burning house on her arm and we got going. This was the first time I'd experienced any sort of language barrier whilst in Zurich, and it made this particular tattoo very difficult to do. Vanessa was obviously in a lot of pain, yet I was unable to make conversation with her to try to take her mind off it. I was pleased with the finished tattoo, but there isn't a photo of this one either, so it's another one you'll have to imagine.

The following day I set off on the next leg of my journey – to Berlin, via stopovers in Munich (where I got caught in the middle of a huge street fight) and Prague (where the police were less than helpful and things very nearly turned nasty when my bike was knocked off its parking stand by a hit-and-run driver). As I travelled north, the weather got better and riding a motorbike became an enjoyable experience once more. I'm not going to lie to you. Being on a bike in the cold and the rain is shit!

Agat working



In Berlin I met my friend Milly, who I hadn't seen for a couple of years. We had a lot of catching up to do, and an evening of talking and drinking turned into a night of karaoke (yes, even me!) followed by a session in the local metal bar on the corner of Milly's street just as the sun was coming up, all of which proved to be only a foretaste of the great socialising I would do while I was here in Berlin. I did absolutely no sightseeing whatsoever. I was too busy having a good time with my awesome friends, old and new.

My guest spot was at Erntezeit. On my very first day, I got there a little later than planned due to stop-off for a delicious breakfast en route. Sabine, my appointment for the day, was already waiting for me when I arrived. As I introduced myself to everyone I felt quite rude for being late, and sheepishly started getting myself set up. Sabine's design, on her forearm, was a tribute to her friend. It was of a girl sailing a small boat with scenery in the background, all encased in a rope border, and it obviously meant a lot to her so I felt honoured to be doing it. Sabine hadn't been able to get an appointment with me in her home city of Amsterdam (where I would be guesting later in my trip) so instead she'd taken the train all the way to Berlin to get tattooed. I was very humbled. We had a really good day, with plenty of fun conversation and a very nice vibe in the shop.

I'd set aside the next day to tattoo Milly and our mutual friend Ema from London. On Milly I tattooed a whale, which we decided to name Bruce, a halved avocado with an artichoke and tomatoes and a small pineapple. Then in the evening I tattooed Ema with a matching pineapple and a tooth on her forearm. It was a long day doing so many tattoos one after the other, but when we left the studio everyone was happy and cheerful. But after all my late nights, I was pooped.

Prague



by Nick Whybrow

Suddenly it was my last day at Erntezeit and I felt sad, because I'd really enjoyed my stay here. Christoph (the owner) and everyone at the studio had made me feel part of the family right from the word go. My first appointment on my final day was Kapiatry. When she arrived, I showed her my rough sketch for her tattoo and we discussed some changes. While I was drawing, she told me her life story and explained what each element of the tattoo represented to her (it was a diamond with a tree growing from it and a waterfall cascading on to rocks below). I really enjoy getting to talk to people about their lives while I'm tattooing. My next clients were my friends Mike D and An from Australia. An was first in the chair. I drew a Carum flower on the back of her arm and set about tattooing it. I don't do much

freehand work, so I was a bit nervous, but it all turned out fine. Next up was the legend that is Mike D! I'd made really good friends with Mike when I was in Melbourne a few years back, and it was now a great pleasure to spend time with him in this hemisphere. I tattooed a sundial on him to symbolise his upcoming exhibition in Australia (called 'These Things Take Time'). And when I finished that tattoo, my guest spot at Erntezeit came to an end.

In case you haven't already guessed, I really liked Berlin! I'd had a brilliant time and I didn't really want to leave, but it was time to go. The city had launched itself into an intense heatwave and as I set off I couldn't wait to get onto the autobahn where the moving air would cool me down.

I was on my way to Copenhagen, for the next instalment of my epic European tour...

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See next month's *Total Tattoo* for Part 3 of Nick's travel diary



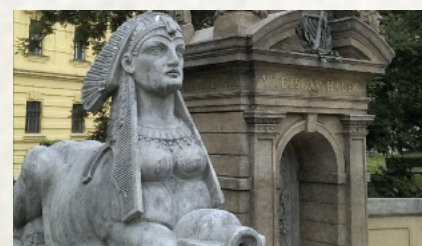
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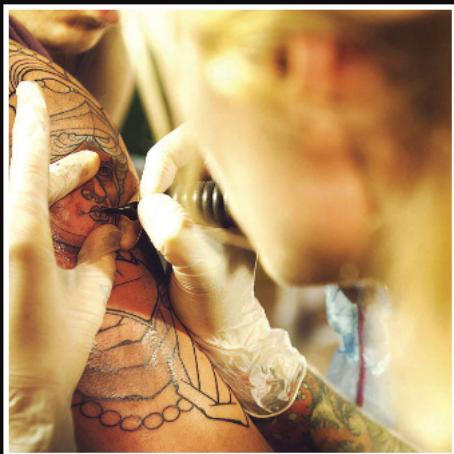
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Myra Brodsky

Interview by James Sandercock
Photos by Myra Brodsky

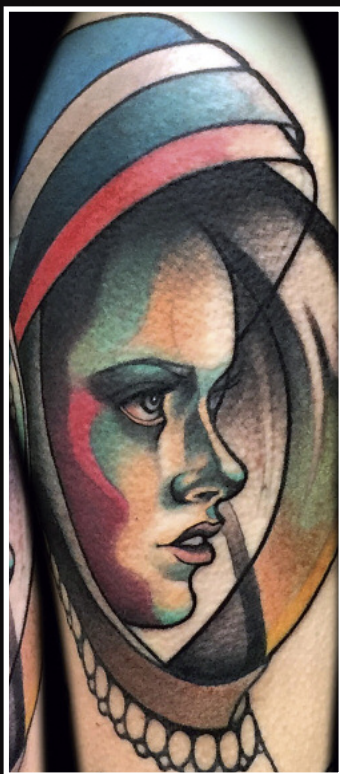


It was a fresh autumn morning when I arrived in East London to interview Myra Brodsky, during her guest spot at Seven Doors Tattoo. The flat light sucked all the colour out of my surroundings; even the graffiti-covered walls of Brick Lane (one of East London's hubs of street culture) seemed muted by it. As I clambered off my bike and unfolded my limbs, my phone rang. It was Myra and we had a conversation that went something like this: "I'm here. Where are you?" "I'm here as well. Where are you?" "I think I can see you. Are you the slightly overweight, middle-aged balding man?" "Yes." A few minutes later we had exchanged pleasantries and ordered coffee, and I hit the 'record' button. Unlike many of the artists I interview, I knew virtually nothing about the young women in front of me, other than the fact that she did great tattoos and had a small gold Star of David round her neck.

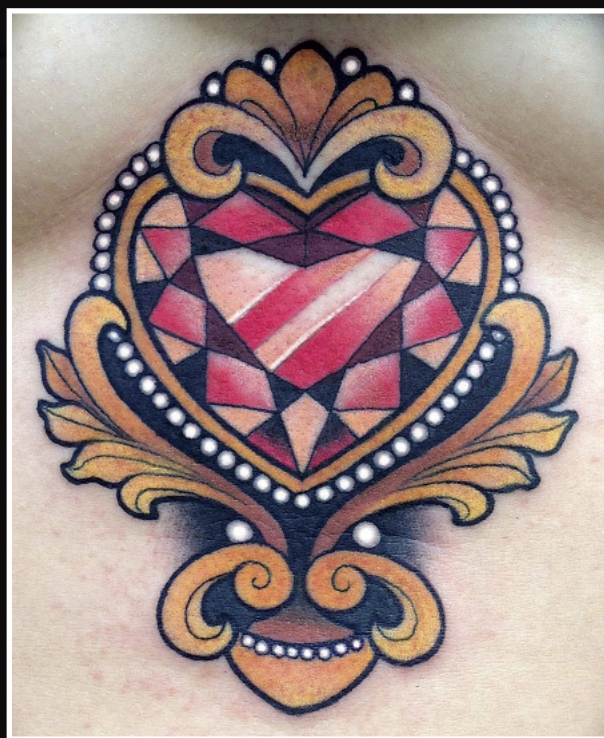
Myra grew up in the south west of Germany, in a conservative Jewish household with her parents and twin sister. Her mother ran a casino and her father sold slot machines to establishments in Las Vegas. Neither of her parents were creative, nor were they particularly interested in that side of life for their daughters. Young Myra loved drawing but didn't feel that she was particularly talented. "I wasn't doing anything very different from other children. But I just never stopped. I kept working at it, when most gave up."



*'I feel good alone. It's a luxury for me.
Being alone makes me happy, to be honest.'*



As time went by and she started to make her own decisions, it was inevitable that her love of art and her unique creativity were going to lock horns with orthodox Judaism. "The Jewish religion doesn't allow tattoos or piercings or any individuality. You are forced to follow lots of rules, so you can imagine my parents didn't accept my choice to jump into the tattoo industry." At this point in our conversation I felt I had to ask Myra how her parents reconciled their religion with making their living from the gambling trade, which could be seen as much more insidious than tattooing. "I know, right! Every day I said them, 'You make your money working in an industry that is frowned upon all over the world.' They said it was a reliable way of earning a living, and that I should just finish school and go to university."





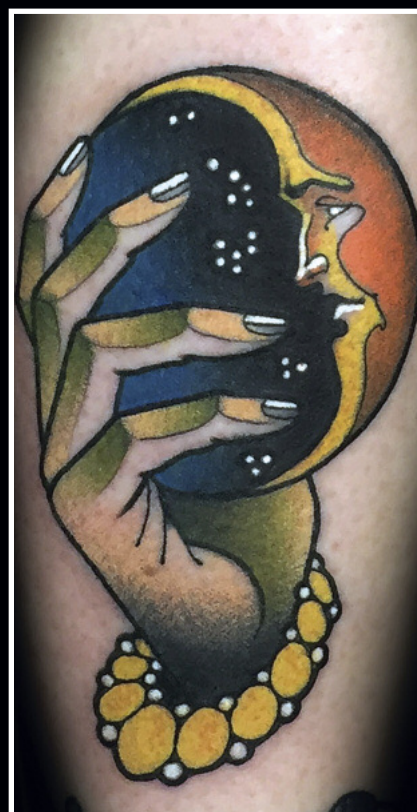
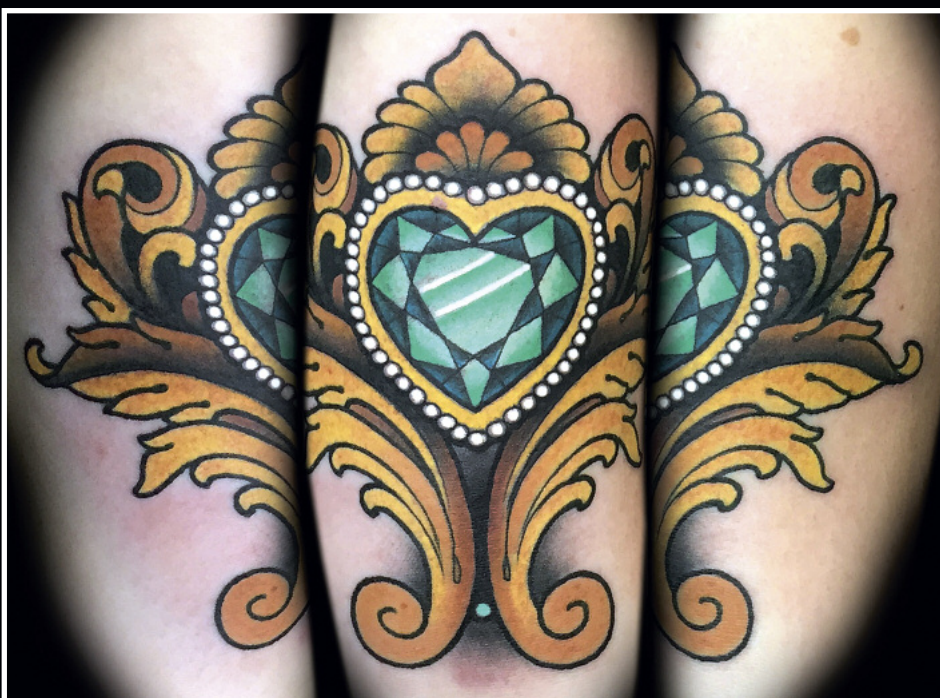
Bowing to parental pressure, that's what Myra did. She went to university in Berlin and eventually graduated with a degree in Visual Communication. But, while she worked hard on the dream her parents had for her, she did not give up on her own aspirations and throughout her time at university she worked on her tattooing. It was in Berlin that she first met her best friend Sonya, which proved to be a pivotal moment. "She was doing an apprenticeship at a tattoo studio, and that really interested me," Myra told me. Sonya started to pass on her knowledge to Myra, who soon became good enough at tattooing to get a job in a street shop. "I was doing twelve hour days: I started university at eight in the morning, worked there until three, then I would head to the shop and tattoo until eight in the evening. Every day was split into two parts. I was exhausted but I knew that this gave me two chances of making a living, so I kept at it."





What made this relentless schedule even more difficult to maintain was that Myra wasn't particularly interested in what they were teaching at university. "I have to be honest, I was really bad there. I don't fit in with the modern way of thinking, and working on computers is not for me; I really hate sitting in front of them for hours on end. I want to create something with my hands. It was a case of forcing myself to do it because my parents told me to, but it wasn't what I wanted to do."

With graphic style tattoos being so popular at the moment, especially in Berlin, I wondered if there had been any cross-over between Myra's graphic design education and her tattooing. "I know some people have done that but I haven't. For me, the two things are totally different. I always wanted to tattoo for a living and the world of graphic design was not something I ever wanted to be part of."



By the time Myra left university at the age of 22, she was a competent tattooist but she did not consider herself an artist. She worked in a succession of street shops, doing whatever came through the door. She was making a living and standing on her own two feet, and that made her feel good, but eventually things started to grate. "It wasn't making me happy anymore. I wasn't doing the type of work that I could use to build a portfolio. I didn't actually want people to see the tattoos I was doing. All I could do was draw and paint a lot, make my own flash sheets and ask people if they wanted something from them."

In 2012 Myra decided to open her own shop in Berlin. She called it The Decay Parlour. "None of the good studios in the city would give me a job. They all said they didn't want a girl working there or they told me I was too shy. When I opened my shop, I got some negative comments from a few of the shops that had turned me down. 'You're a girl, nobody wants what you do.' 'Get out, you don't belong in the tattoo community.' I thought it was just pathetic."

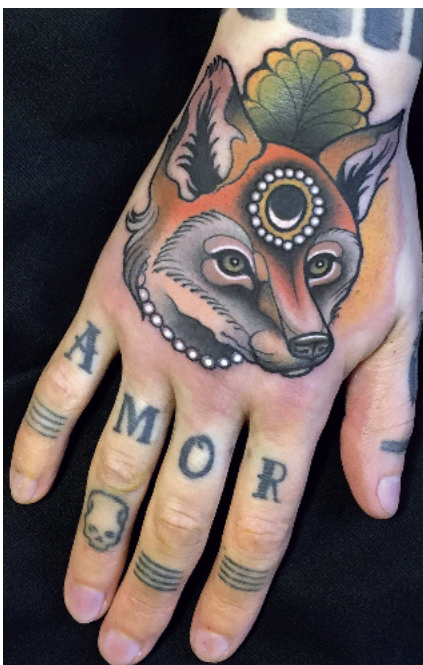




Myra admits she does face some challenges when it comes to interacting with people. "When I started to tattoo I was really shy. Everybody told me I couldn't do it because I wasn't able to talk to people. There were reasons for that though. My parents kept me away from other kids, and at school I was always the one who was bullied. I didn't have the confidence that some people have. When I started university I had no friends and it was so hard to talk to people but, as I gained some life experience, I began to learn those skills. I'm convinced I have made a lot of progress. I think it's a German thing, not to be welcoming to the new guy. I feel more comfortable in other countries. I can't get on with the German mentality anymore!"

Perhaps unsurprisingly, Myra is not all that fond of Berlin; she doesn't feel part of the tattoo scene there and has very little to do with the hundreds of other tattooists who call it home. Many of her customers are not Berliners but travel to get tattooed by her, either from within Germany or from further afield. And Myra is not averse to a bit of travel herself. "I like where I work, but I also love doing guest spots. I did my first one in 2014 at Adam Hay's shop in New York. I loved the vibe there. It's fantastic to be working at Seven Doors as well. I respect the artists who work here so much. They are so open."

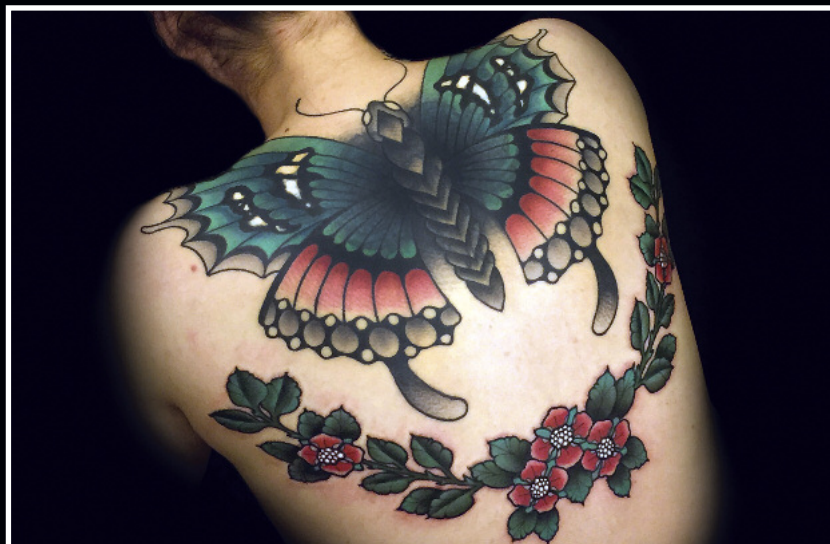





When we finally get round to talking about Myra's tattoos, one thing that immediately emerges is her love for art history. "I take my inspiration from all the great eras of art: from the Victorian period and, of course, Art Nouveau. The flow of lines from that style can be adapted and many of the elements can work with anything. It has a timeless appeal and, as a tattoo artist, my task is to create something that people will always like."

Chatting with Myra for half an hour or so, I found her honesty and frankness refreshing but I felt I had only scratched the surface with this talented young artist. But time was moving on, it was getting cold and a chilly wind was making its presence known, so I ended our conversation by asking the question that is so loaded it could floor an elephant from fifty paces. Would you say you are happy at the moment? "Wow! [laughs] In some ways, of course. I'm totally alone but I'm used to that. If I had someone else to take care of, I would be overwhelmed. I feel good alone; it's a luxury for me. Being alone makes me happy, to be honest." The single life also allows for maximum productivity and that is vital for Myra. She has a new book of previously unpublished tattoos and paintings coming out soon and has a collaboration lined up for next year's Berlin Fashion Week, but that is all very hush hush. One thing is for sure: this is one young lady with a quiet determination who achieves anything she sets out to do. Our paths may not have crossed before this interview, but I certainly hope they cross again.


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TALES FROM THE NAUGHTY STEP

by Paul Talbot

“
God grant me the
serenity to accept the
things I cannot
change, the courage
to change the things
I can, and the wisdom
to know the
difference.
”

Reinhold Niebuhr



very kindly given me a voice even though they know the dangers of doing so!

As artists we are the centre of the world of tattooing, whether you're 30 years or 30 minutes into your career. We are the creators of the content that fills magazines, websites, social media, etc. We are the names that draw people to conventions in their droves and our endorsements are the reason that other artists buy the myriad of products that we use. And yet we hardly ever wield our influence to make positive changes to the industry we work in.

As a tattoo fan - whether you have one tattoo or just enough space for one more - you are the target audience for all of the above and more, and yet you have no way of saying 'I don't agree with this' except for not buying or not showing up. This is a power without doubt, but wouldn't you prefer to improve our tattoo world rather than pull it all down just to have to start all over again? 'Meet the new boss, same as the old boss' is a lyric that comes to mind... Recent events in the UK tattoo scene (and anyone who knows me will be well aware of what I'm alluding to) have proven to us that if we all - artists, traders, convention organisers and clients - make a stand against the things that we don't agree with, we can make changes that greatly benefit 'the scene'.

Hello, dear readers. Paul Talbot here, your favourite Brummie gobshite, with a new column and a new mission that has landed me once again on the naughty step. The big idea behind this discourse is to shine a spotlight on some of the things in tattooing that we all know about (and often bemoan in hotel bars all over the world) but never really make any effort to change. We just shrug and say 'That's just the way it is' or 'What are you gonna do?'

But why? Why don't we make an effort to change the things we cannot accept?

Before I get to the why, I'd like to tell you about a guy who I never met and never knew but nevertheless had a huge influence on me. He was my main inspiration when pitching the idea for this column to the team at Total Tattoo. Dr. Ian Richard 'Maz' Harris, PhD was best known in the European motorcycle community for his 'Radical Times' articles in Back Street Heroes magazine. Maz was an ardent

campaigner for civil liberties and bikers' rights. His column was easily my favourite thing about BSH. His insightful, intelligent word-smithery would influence how the young me saw the world and my place in it. Reading his thoughts gave me the idea that if I really wanted to I could try to shape the world around me, rather than just accept the b*llshit without a murmur of discord.

Sadly, Maz died on the evening of 31st May 2000 as a result of a motorcycle accident near his home in Kent, so I'll never get the chance to thank him personally for his influence in my life or the fact that I became a writer because of him. So, I'll say it here: 'Maz, thank you.' I'm sure you all have your heroes. I have mine and he was (and is) one of them.

It's my intention to take inspiration from Radical Times and use this column to present issues in our world of tattooing as I see them and that, in my opinion, require our attention. You won't always agree with me (hell, even the editor doesn't!) but that's the point. Let's all TALK about it and do something about it. It's important to mention, of course, that the opinions written in this column are mine and not necessarily those of Total Tattoo. They have

Michelle Maddison

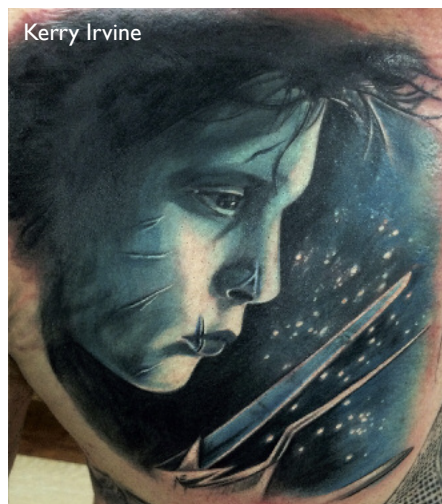


I would much prefer to improve our industry by eradicating the outdated behaviours and sharp business practices we sometimes accept as a part of 'the game' we're all in, rather than just sit back and let other, far less qualified individuals take charge.

If I p*ss you off (and I will), or say something amazing that you want to add to, or even if you have a topic that gets under your skin that you'd like to discuss, email me:

talesfromthenaughtystep@gmail.com

I'll read what you have to say (unless your name is 'Dave' and you're selling Yu-long tattoo shite from China) and try to cover it in this column. And that brings me neatly to the thing I would like to discuss this month. Women...



Kerry Irvine



Kerry Irvine

And by this I mean our attitude to the women within our industry. Female tattoo artists get a raw deal as far as I am concerned (and I know there's a lot of people out there who will agree with me).

I have plenty of female artist friends, some of whom are better tattooists than I'll ever be. I've spoken to them about this over the years and I'm both ashamed and disgusted that we - a so-called alternative subculture - hold such old-fashioned, mainstream attitudes when it comes to the difference between a male tattooist and a female one. I can think of no reason whatsoever why being a girl would hinder an artist's creativity or technical ability in any way. The amazing wealth of talent and creative viewpoint that the women in our industry bring surely makes tattooing an ever-stronger place.

However, all the female tattooists I've spoken to won't tell you stories of acceptance and equality. Instead they'll tell you horror stories that start right from their apprenticeships ('Be a good girl, do the dishes and answer the phones for the rest of the day, will you?') and continue throughout their careers. One female artist told me what happened when she was working a very prestigious tattoo convention. Having worked all weekend on a large piece, she won a prize in the tattoo contests. As she was sitting in her booth having a well-earned beer at the end of that same day, the artists and convention-goers who had seen the piece during judging came over to congratulate him. Yes, him. They strolled up to the booth and congratulated

her boyfriend on his amazing work and even enquired about getting a piece by him. When he explained that he wasn't the artist and that the piece had been done by the woman sitting next to him, some were amazed that a girl was capable of such work and some prospective clients were suddenly no longer interested in getting a tattoo!

Add to this the idea that female artists are expected to be alt. model gorgeous every day of the week, when guys can regularly turn up to work looking like we got dressed in the dark and no-one even bats an eyelid, and the fact that any achievement, sponsorship or award is met with muttered 'Who did she shag to get that?' comments (sometimes even from other girls! Ffs!) and you get a picture of the part of this industry that need examining and sorting out sharpish.

I have a daughter who wants to be a tattooist. In an industry full of amazing role models for a young girl - independent, business-owning, successful, creative, individually beautiful women - I'm annoyed and dismayed that we still cling to this old world 'girls aren't as good as boys' bullshit. Can we please just move the fuck on?

I've never been asked to 'get them out' in order to get an interview in a magazine but I know plenty of female artists who have. And, because it is presumed that you won't buy a



Sam Barber



Michelle Maddison

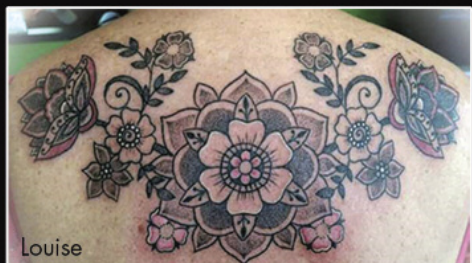
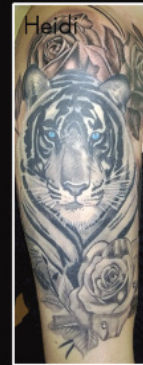
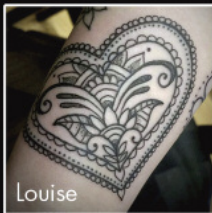
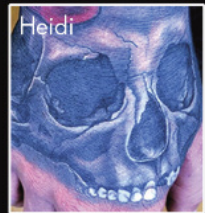
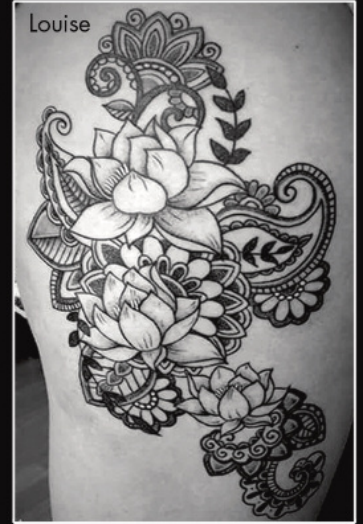
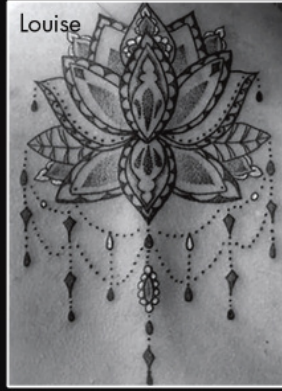
magazine unless there's a pretty girl in her underwear on the cover (yes, the market research people in the publishing industry think you are that stupid and shallow and that it's still 1995), some have acquiesced to that particular request. However instead of criticising these girls, we should ask the question 'Why is that question even asked of female artists?' Any male artist asked a similar question would undoubtedly answer 'It's all about the art, not my image' so why isn't it the same for the girls?

The playing field simply isn't level and girls get a raw deal right across the board in all areas of life and work but, in the tattoo field, we can actually influence how they are perceived by removing the male artist / female artist perception. We are artists, plain and simple, and gender has nothing to do with ability.



See you next time - Paul

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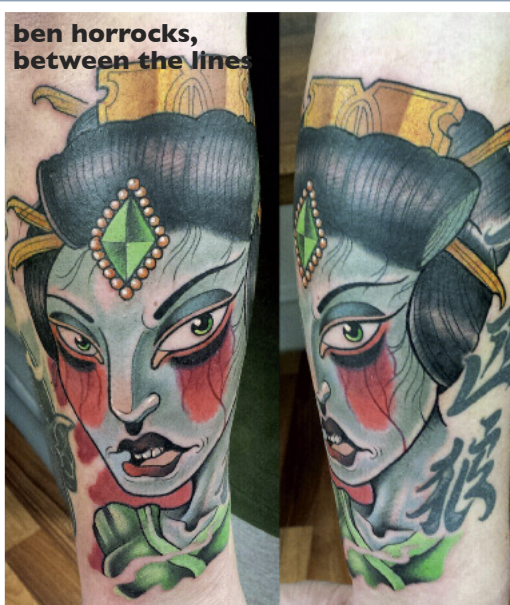
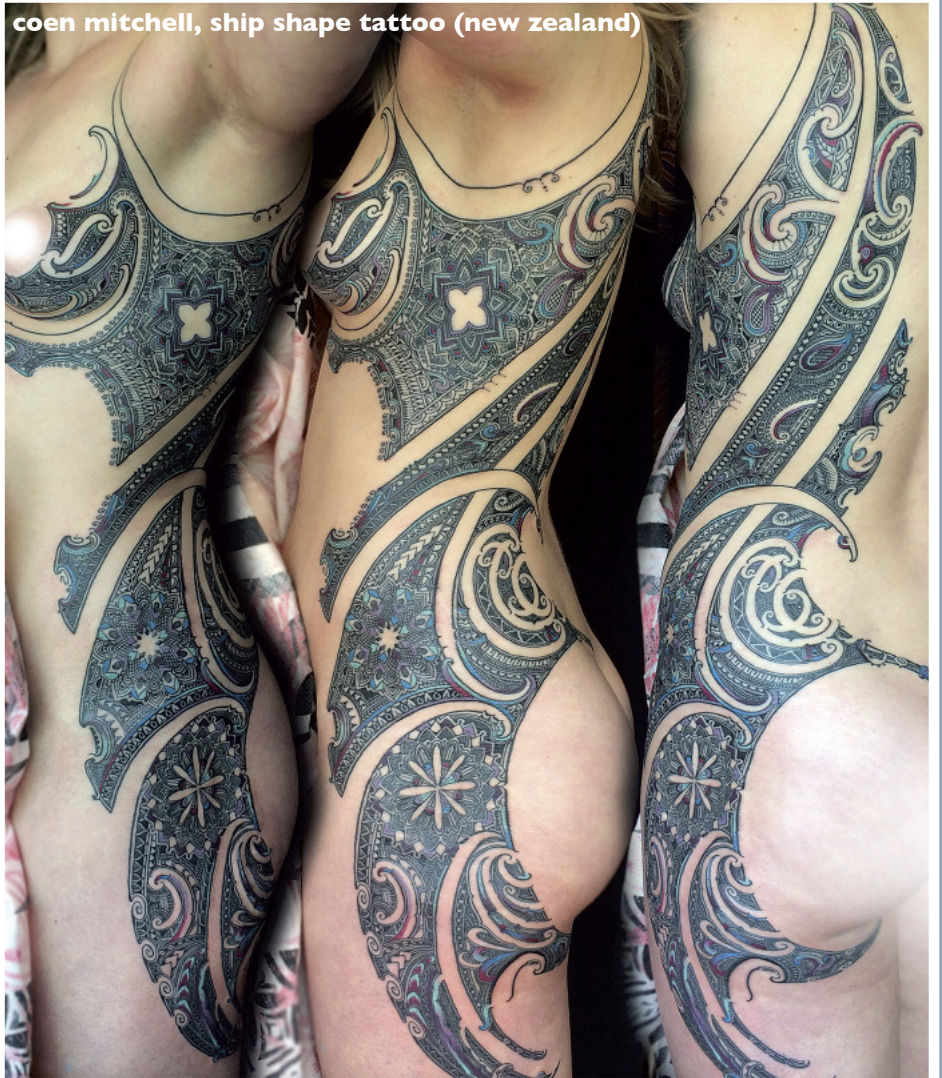
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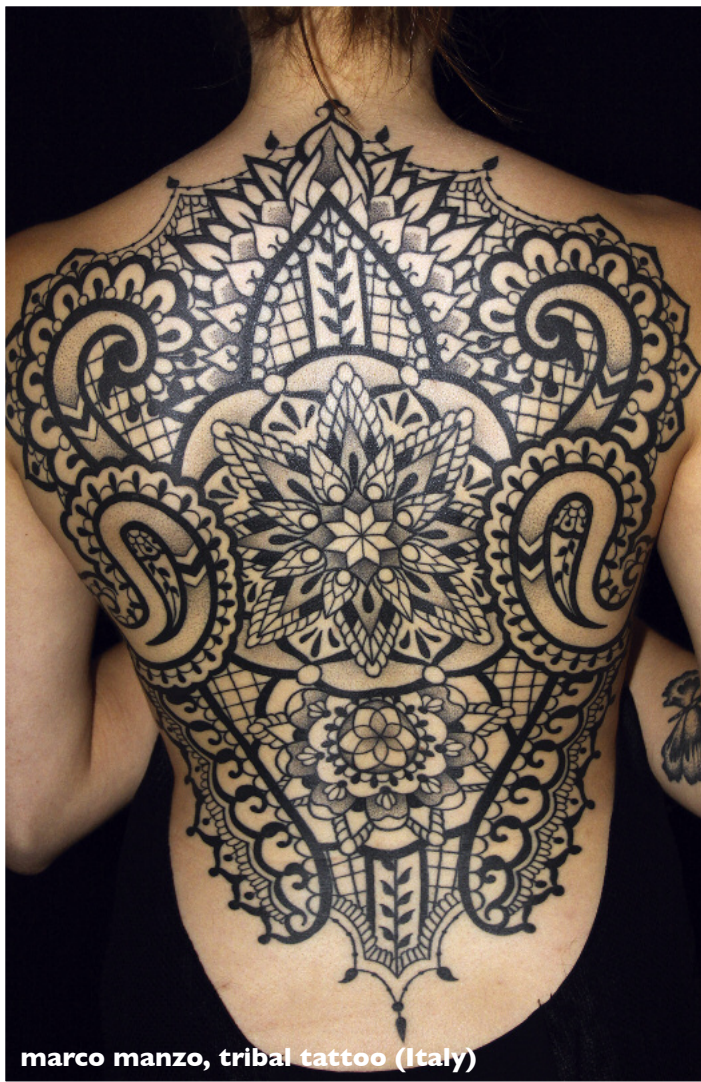
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GALLERY





marco manzo, tribal tattoo (italy)



kayley warrington, immortal ink



fernle andrade, skin design (usa)



len leye, clan of tusk (belgium)



**wizard gareth,
coffinbirth
tattoo
(usa)**

tony mancia, tattoo your soul (usa)



thaiger man, electric thaiger



phil kyle, magnum opus

piotrek, southmead tattoo





luke naylor, hand on heart studio



champion grubbs, guru tattoo (usa)



michele pitacco, off the map (italy)



nikko hurtado
black anchor collective



filip leu, the leu family's family iron (switzerland)



joe carpenter, inkaddiction studios



luke botterill, black dragon tattoos



eliot kohek,
overkame tattoo collective (france)



becci boo murphy
vida loca tattoo studio



becci boo murphy
vida loca tattoo studio



kamil mocet, kamil tattoo

beth cust, limited edition



tim mcevoy, guru tattoo (usa)

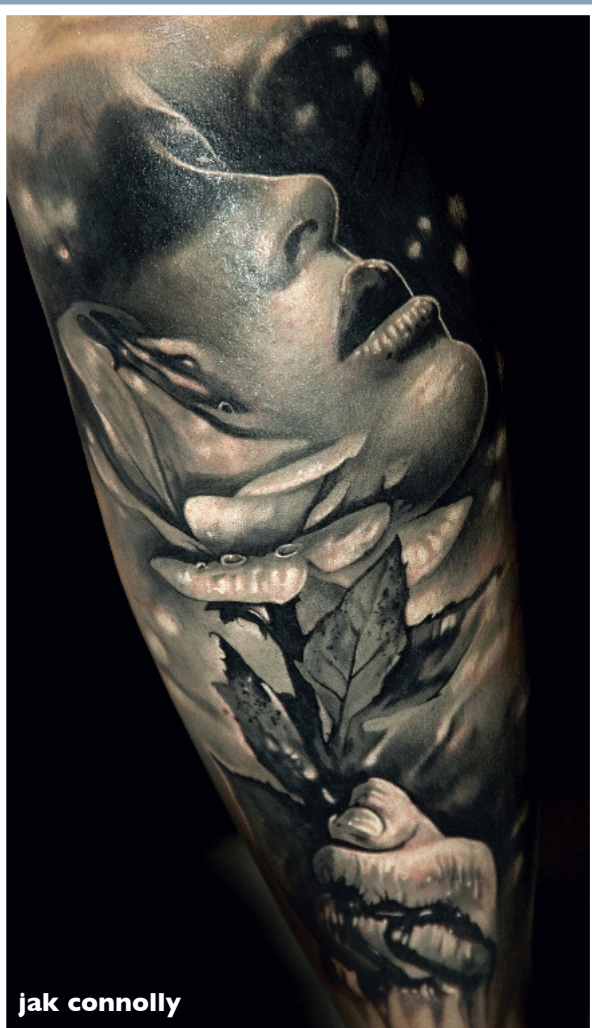


marie folklore, folklore tattoo

aaron della vedova, guru tattoo (usa)



kirill putyatin, good luck tattoo (russia)



jak connolly



romi kundracikova, gothic tattoo



**craig, family honour
tattoo studio**



anna garvey, adorn



rich wells, dock street tattoos

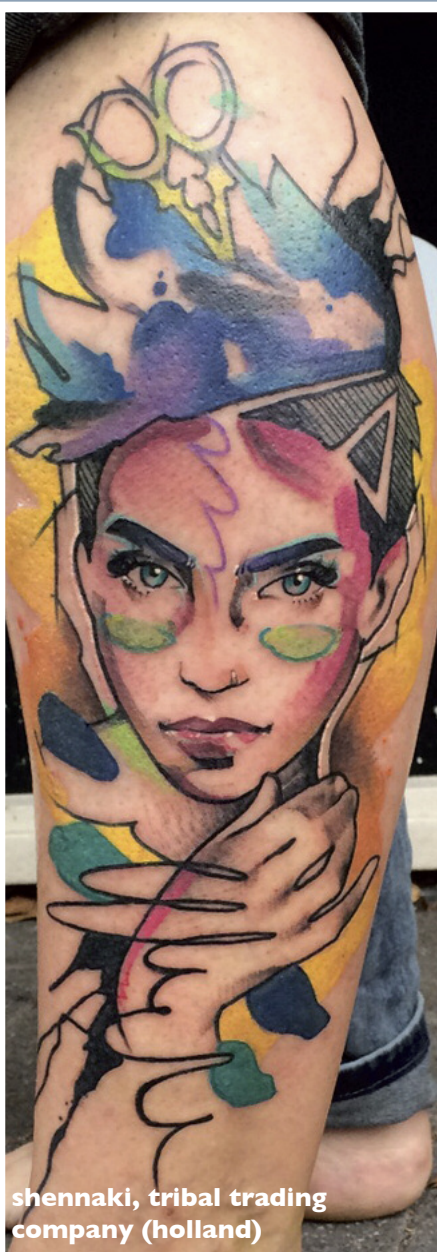


mater totémica,
area industriale tattoo (italy)

matthew james, no regrets



aaron della vedova, guru tattoo (usa)



shennaki, tribal trading company (holland)



robert borbas, rooklet ink (hungary)

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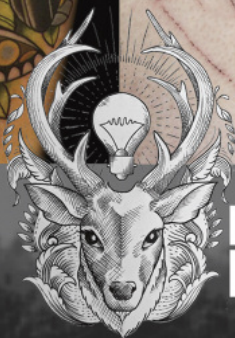
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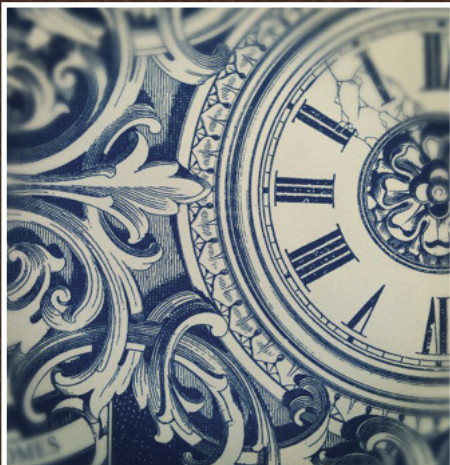
Thomas Bates started out as an illustrator. He fell into the tattoo industry just three years ago, and in that short space of time he has perfected the art of transferring his incredibly detailed illustrations from paper to skin. It's clear to see that this is where his true talent lies. Thomas's fine line designs might look like etchings that wouldn't be out of place in an antiquarian book, but his work brings this intricate style right up to date and he is creating beautiful tattoos for the 21st century.

Were you artistic when you were a child or is it something that has developed over time?

I've been drawing since I was about five years old and just never stopped. Drawing the Turtles and superheroes – mainly Spiderman and Terminator from what I can remember. I had the passion... the passion for Spiderman.

You started as an illustrator. Did you go to art college?

Yeah, I went to college and did graphic design. There was a bit of illustration involved but it was mainly computer-based work, and it sharpened my skills with things like Photoshop. This was ideal because it's one of my key tools. I use it for anything from band artwork to refining my tattoo stencils.



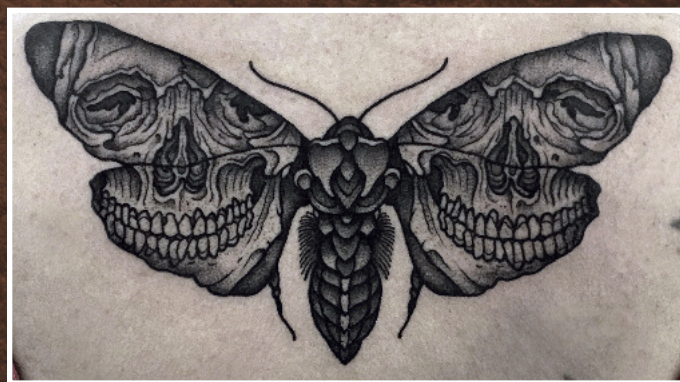


Your illustrations are very detailed. They look like they would take weeks to complete. Is this the case?

Thank you! Yes, they do take weeks, or even months. And without the aid of Photoshop I think they would take me *much* longer. I usually start with a pencil drawing then chuck it on to Photoshop to refine it. It can take a lot of time to complete an illustration; it all depends how big it is and how detailed I want it to be.

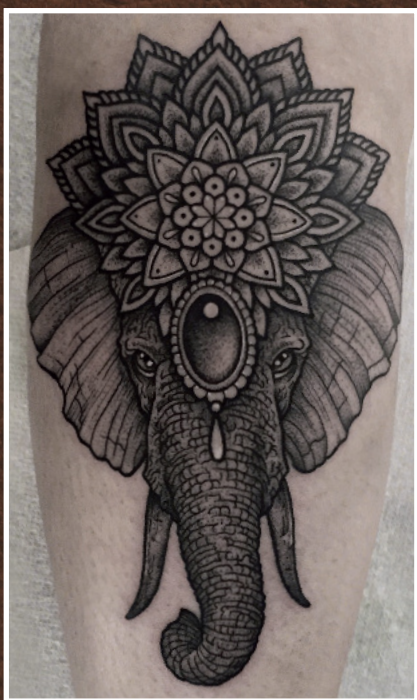
When you first started tattooing, did you plan to transfer your fine line, intricate designs from paper to skin?

No, not really. In the early stages, I started off doing traditional work but I was very influenced by tattoo artists like Duncan X from Into You and Maxime from Sang Bleu. Traditional was what I set out to do, but then I started to do drawings like Duncan X and that seemed to take flight a lot more than the traditional. I enjoyed it because I could refine it and make it more like my illustrative work.



How well do your finely detailed tattoos last?

The first detailed work I knew about was by Thomas Hooper, and I wondered how they would last. Nobody really knows how a tattoo is going to look in years to come. I guess it is all to do with technique. It depends on how clean your lines are. Spacing them out enough will definitely help. All the people who have come back to me, their work has healed well and looks lovely. Obviously the work will age over time, like all tattoos do, but I think there is a charm about that.





How did your apprenticeship come about? Did you go around studios with your portfolio or did you get approached because of your artistic reputation?

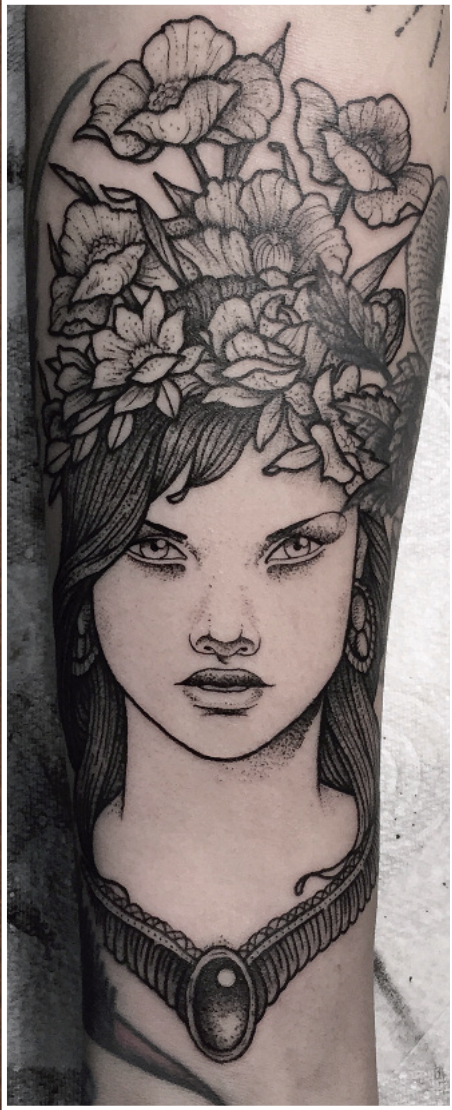
I used to work in a printers. I was doing wedding invites and logos for businesses, that sort of thing, but I was also working out front in the shop, where I had to do the basics like photocopying. A few artists used to come in from a tattoo studio down the road to get stuff photocopied. I got quite friendly with one of them, Wink Evans, and I ended up getting tattooed by him. I used to talk to all the tattooists when they came in. They knew I did the artwork for the band I was in and I used to show them what I had been working on. Eventually I asked if there was any chance I could come into the studio, Factotum in Norwich, to have a look at what they did. That's where it all started. They offered me an apprenticeship. I learnt from two artists there, Josh Fisher and Wink Evans. Josh is still at Factotum but Wink has opened up his own studio called Rag & Bone. Brad Ward helped me out as well. At that point I wanted to be a traditional artist. Brad and Wink both do traditional work but Josh does dotwork. I think that is where I got my edge from; mixing traditional style with dotwork was the start of what I am doing now.



You have a unique style which is hard to categorise. How would you best describe it?

I don't know. I would say the closest thing would be old woodcuts or engravings, but some of them can be quite bold and a little more basic. I try to put as much detail into a tattoo as I can. I am influenced by illustrators perhaps more than tattooists.





Any illustrators in particular?

The biggest influence for me is an artist called Aaron Horkey. He does a lot of work for hardcore and metal bands. People should definitely check out his work. Also Florian Bertmer and Ryan Begley.

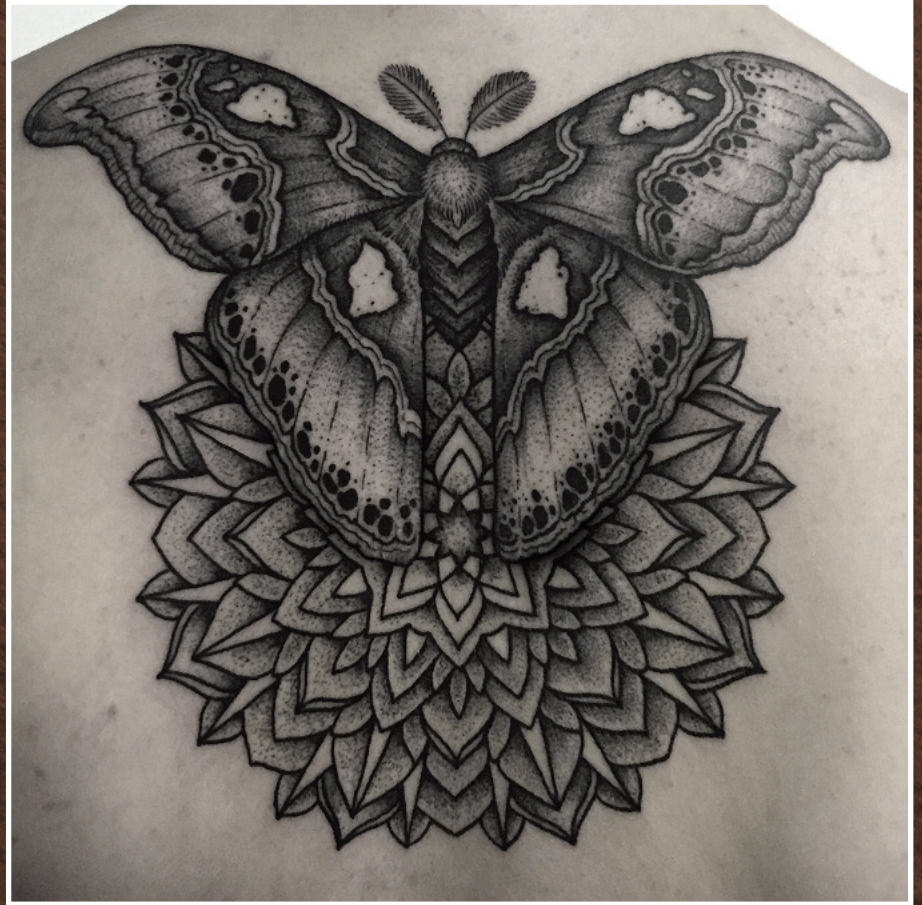
Which tattoo artists are your biggest inspiration?

Thomas Hooper and Duncan X have to be my biggest inspirations for tattooing. They are the two artists who made me want to be a tattooist. Also Wink Evans and Josh Fisher because without them I don't know if I would have got into the industry. That is all I can think of at the moment; there has to be more but I feel under pressure!

How much of a role does the client play in the process of a Tom Bates tattoo?

A big role. Most of my clients have wicked ideas and they are always more than happy to let me adapt them into my own style and do my own thing with them. I have found that all my customers come to me solely for the style that I do, and they are willing to let me run with their basic idea.





You use a lot of satanic symbolism in your illustrations. Have you put them in any of your tattoo designs?

When I first started I used to get asked for a lot of demons and old religious stuff, but not so much anymore. I do miss it. If I was asked for some hidden satanic stuff, I would be well up for doing it! It isn't something I would just sneak into a tattoo without my customer asking for it though.





How do you think your style will progress? I have seen a couple of portraits that you have done with a mix of dotwork and fine lines. Would you like to do more of this?

Yeah, I'd be up for doing more of that. It's the same, whether it's tattooing or illustration; if someone comes to me with an idea I will do it in my style. If somebody wanted a portrait of a family member I would take it on, but I would do it as a mix of dots and lines. It comes from fine art I guess. You can make anything look realistic to a point. I can recreate black and white photos pretty well, especially with dotwork, so this is something I would like to do more.

If I was to say to you 'Tom, I'd like you to tattoo me. You can do whatever you want, whatever size you want', what would you do?

A massive head of Satan! Anything to do with Hell or anything death-related would be my cup of tea.



Now you are a full-time tattoo artist, has illustration taken a back seat? Do you still get asked to do album covers or band t-shirts?

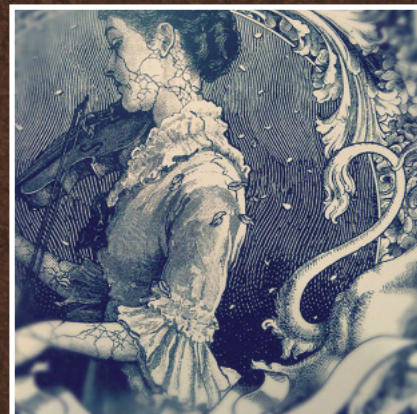
It has taken a back seat, but I do still get asked to do stuff. Doing band artwork is so stressful though! With a tattoo it's just one-on-one, me and my client, and it's easy to come to a good understanding about what they want. With designing merchandise for bands, it's about five different people and they all have views on what they would like. That is really frustrating. I only really do it for mates' bands now, or if it's something I am really into. It is still nice to be asked though.

You had some success as a band member yourself, as the lead singer in The Boy Will Drown...

Yeah, it was great. It was me and two of my best friends – Liam and Ed – and also my brother James. We were always into heavy metal, so we thought we would start a band. We ended up getting signed and toured around the UK and Europe, places like Italy, Germany, Belgium. It was ages ago so it's all just a drunken blur now.

Would you like to get back into it?

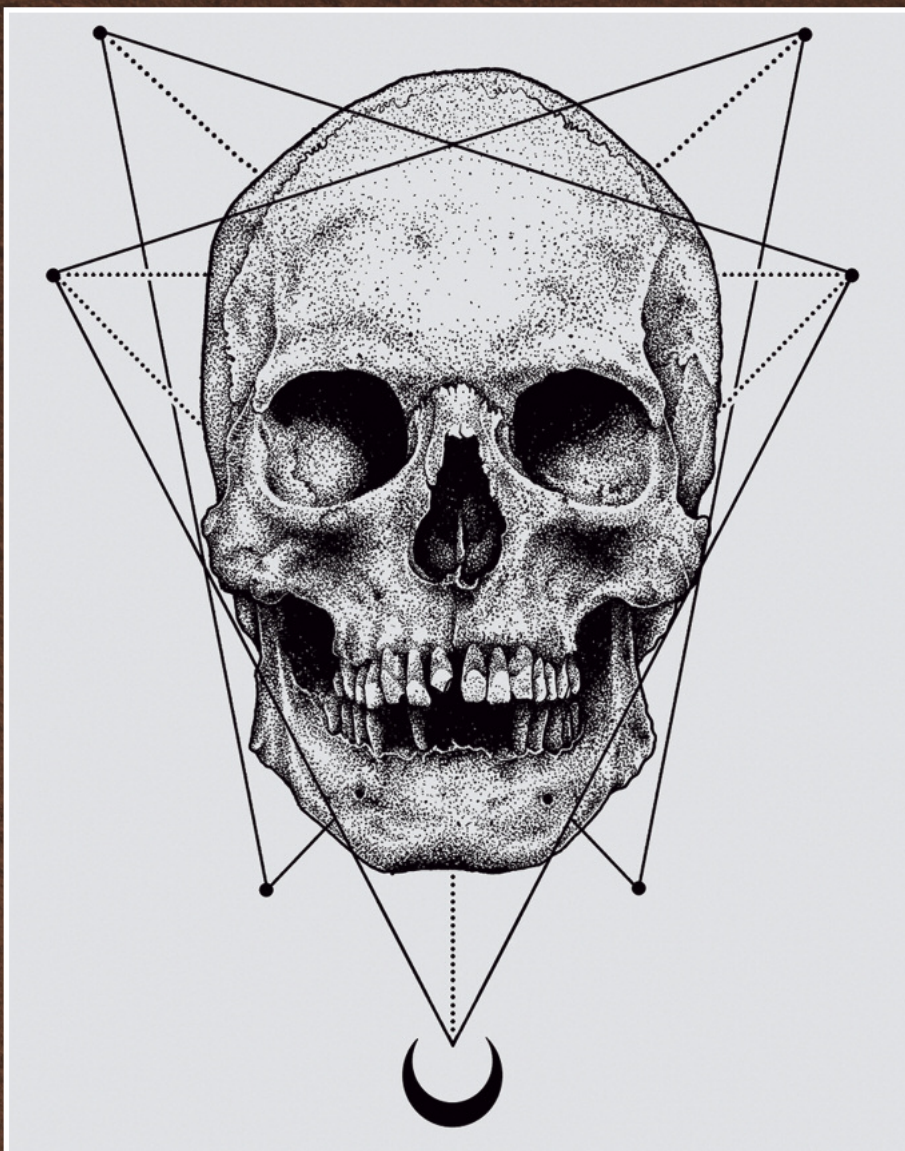
Oh yeah, 100 percent! I would love to do it again. We had a great time.



What made you choose tattooing over being a world famous rock star?

Because there was no money in music. When I was in the band I was young and naive and thought I was going to be earning loads of money, but we weren't Kings of Leon! We were just in a shitty metal band, plodding along. At the time, illustration was only a hobby. Then it turned the other way around and the band became a hobby. Tattooing and illustration is my job but I would totally choose being in a band again. Just as a sideline though, as I would need to earn some sort of money.





You're based at Indigo Tattoo Studio in Norwich, but you've started branching out with recent guest spots at Sang Bleu in London and also in New York. Do you have any others lined up?

I'm having a rest at the minute so I don't really have anything booked, but the next place I am looking to go for a guest spot is Legacy Ink in Haverhill with Mike Stockings and Dan Malloy. I would like to go up north too. Maybe Manchester or Newcastle. That would be nice.

What do you see as the negatives within tattooing, both personally and professionally?

It all depends on what you see as a negative. I love drawing and I love tattooing but, because everything I do is custom and I draw all my designs beforehand, it takes up a lot of my social time. This is fine though and I don't see it as a negative. I just appreciate it more when I have a break from it!

Where do you see your future in tattooing?

Bloody hell! That isn't something I have really thought about. I don't have any goals or targets. I just want to do tattoos that I enjoy for as long as I can. I would also like to travel a bit more. I don't have any dreams of opening a studio or anything like that.

www.facebook.com/artoftombates
Indigo Tattoo Studio, Norwich.



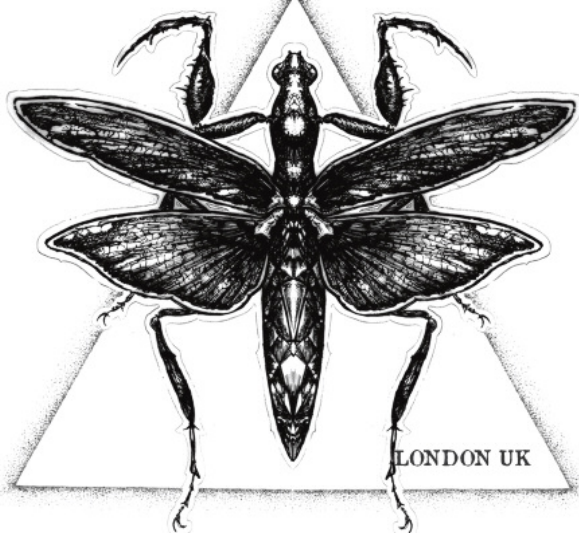
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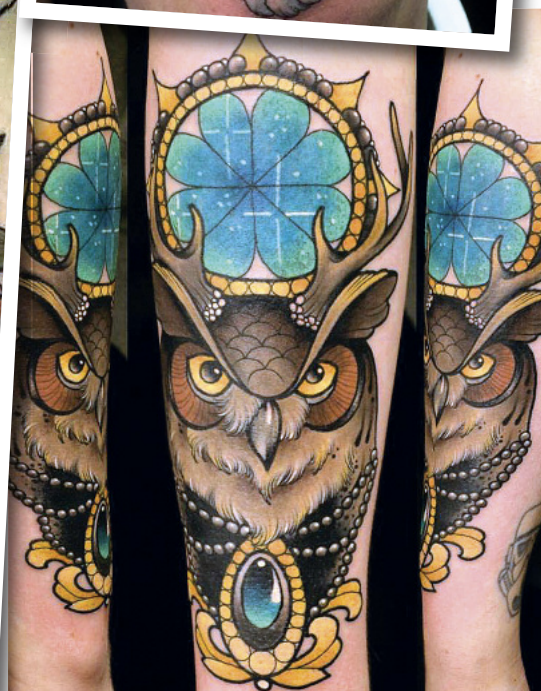
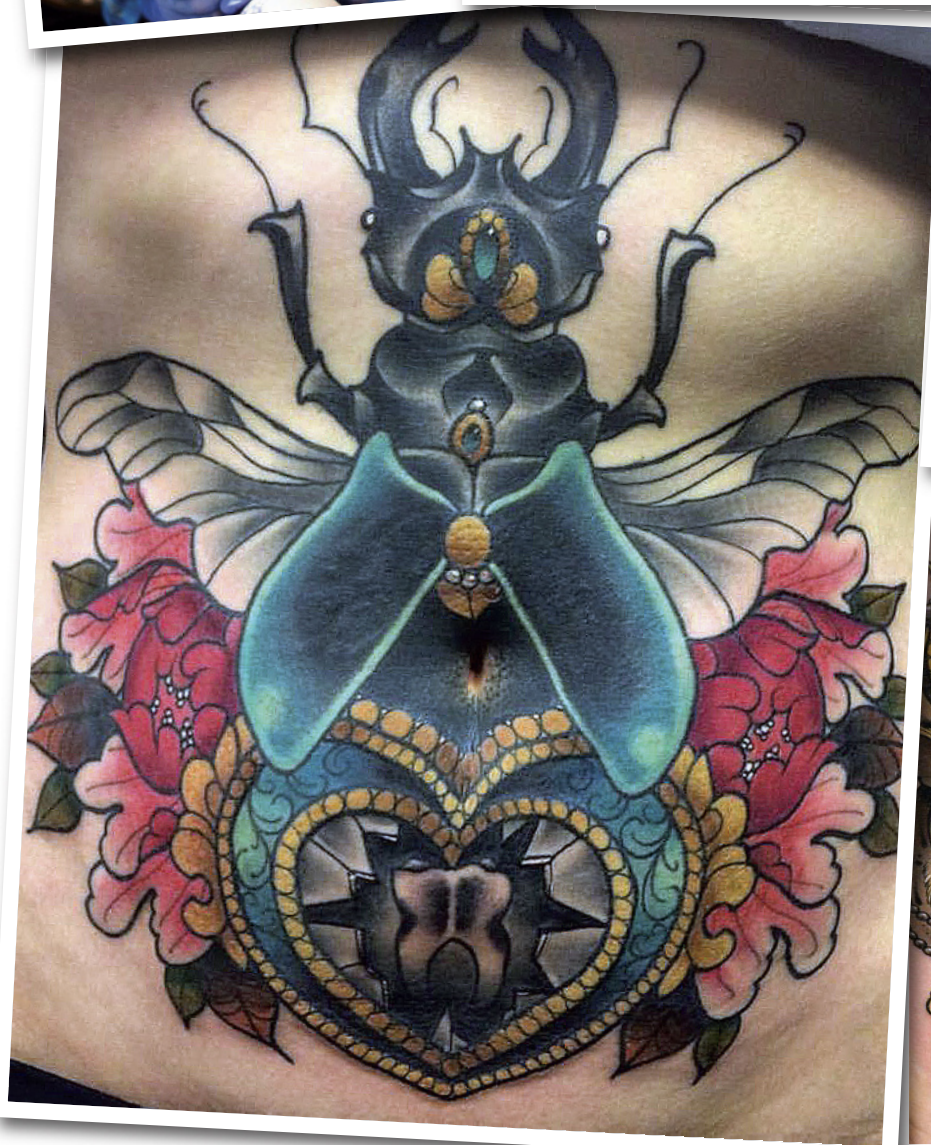
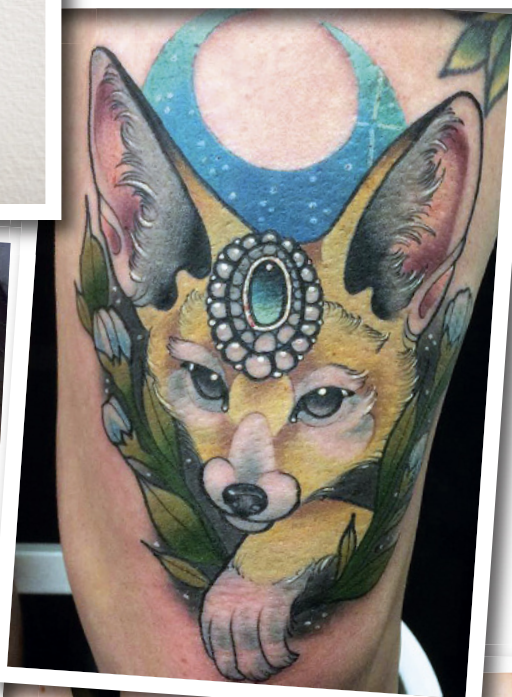
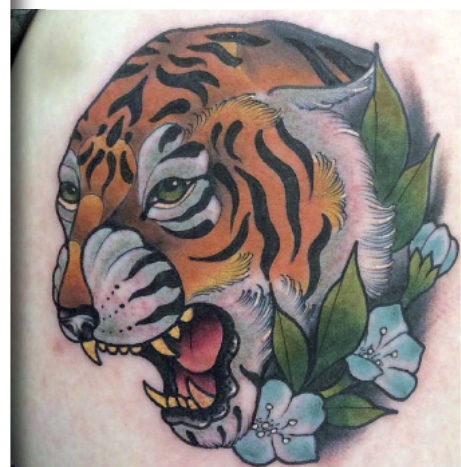
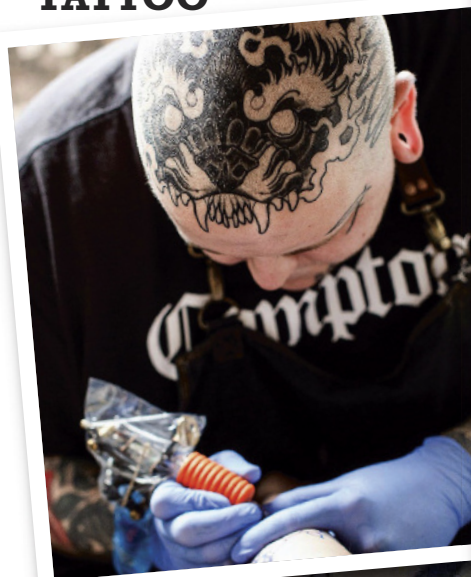


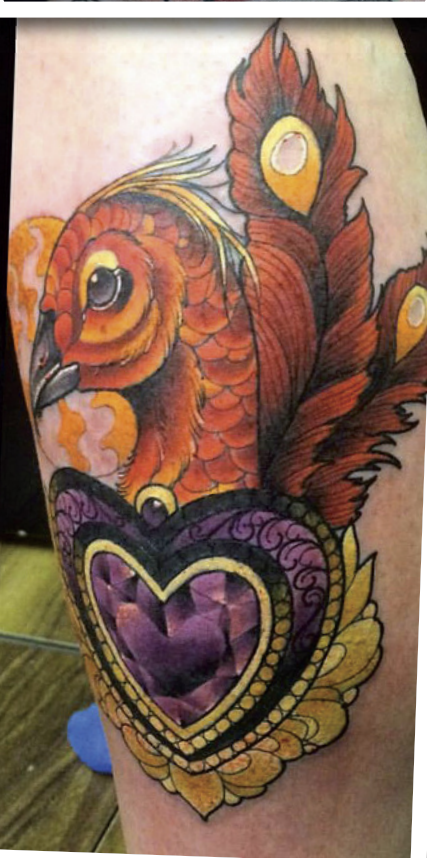
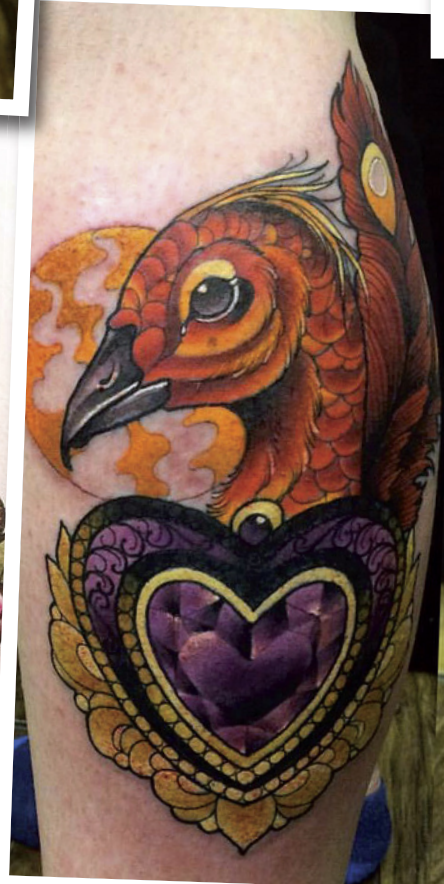
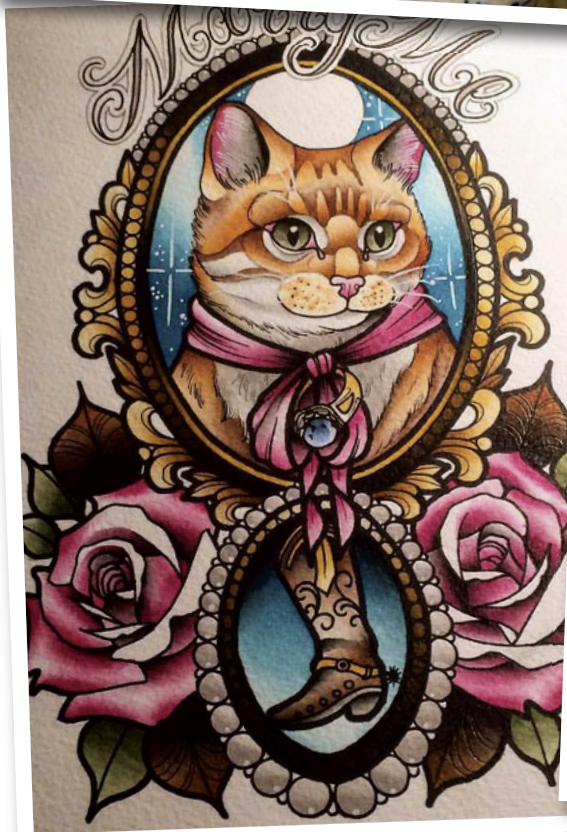
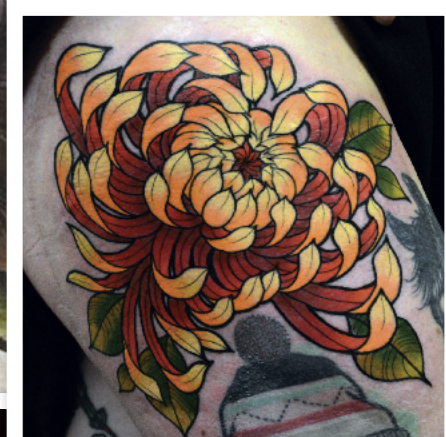
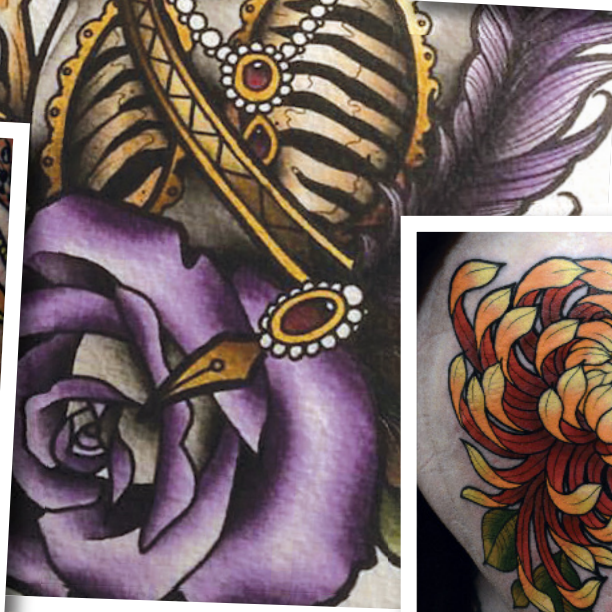
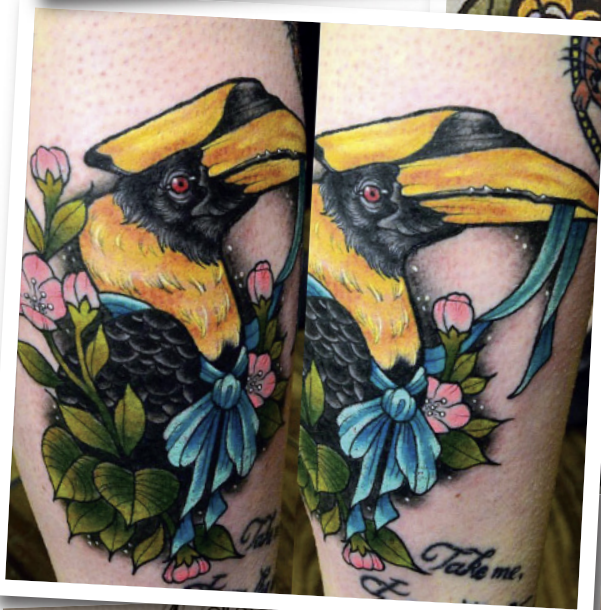
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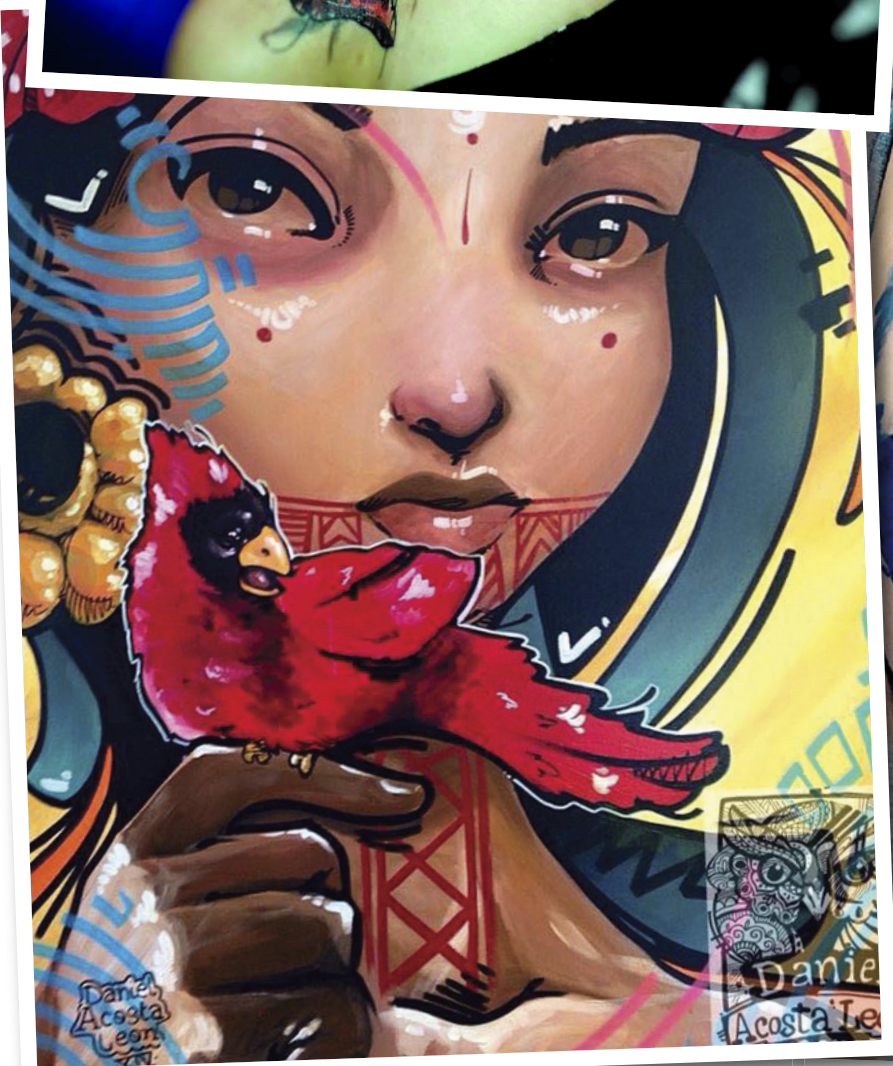
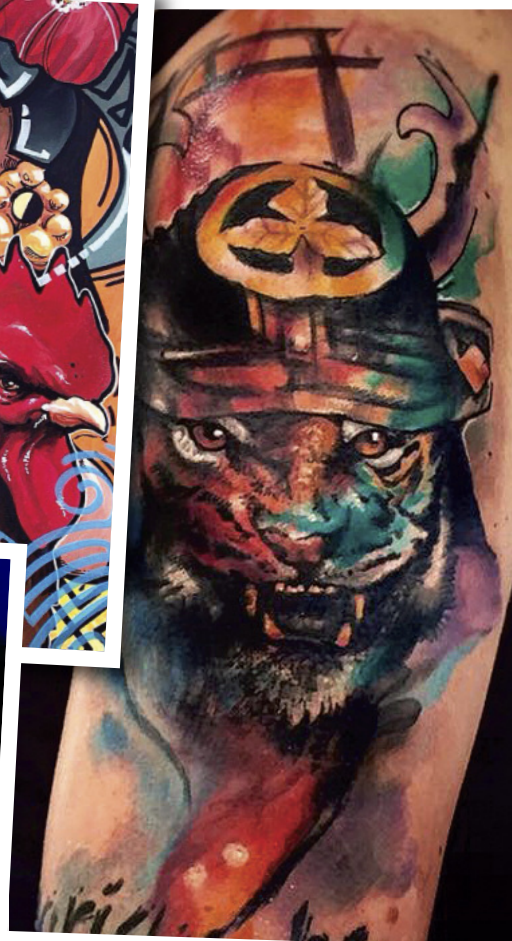
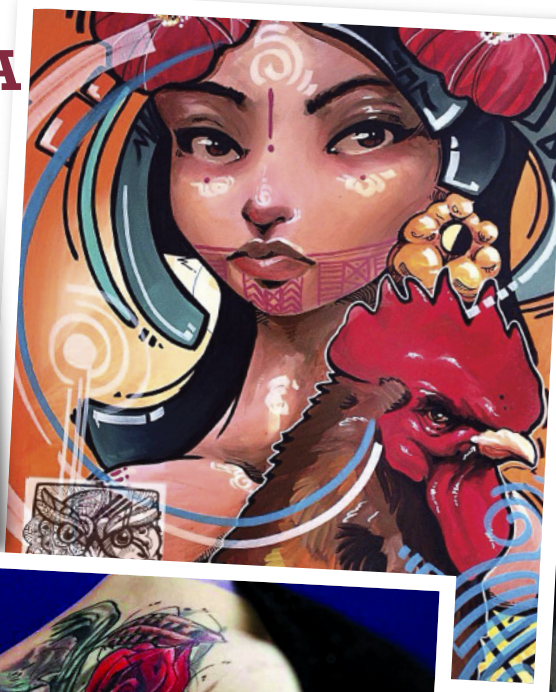
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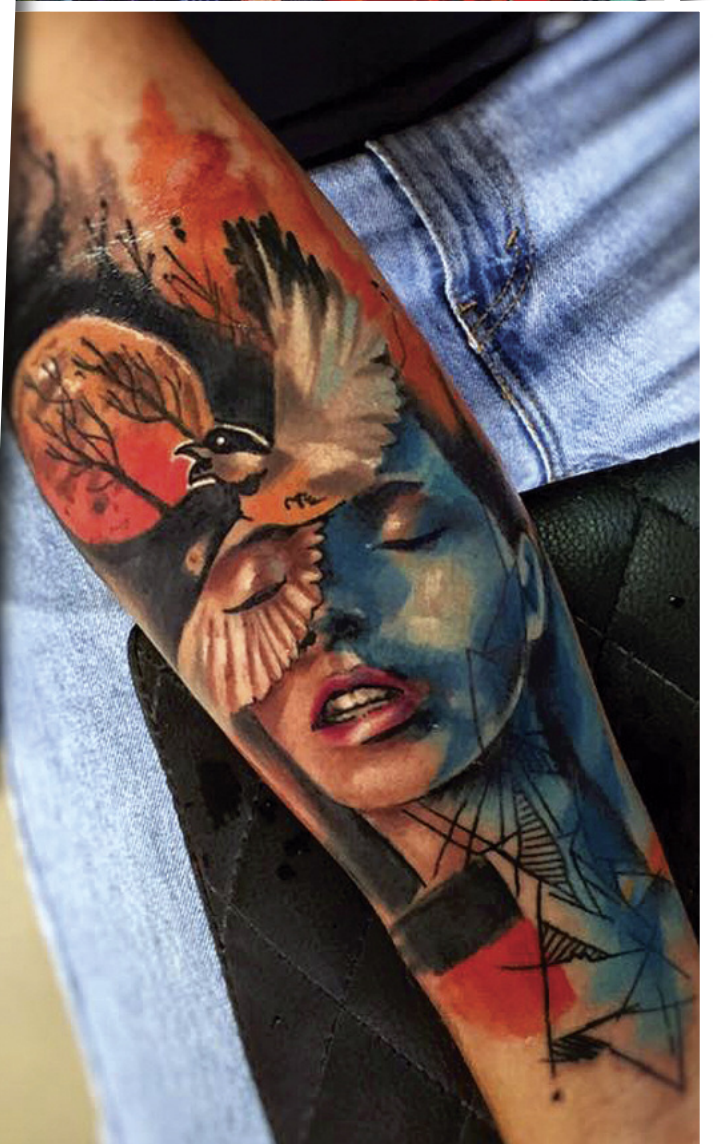
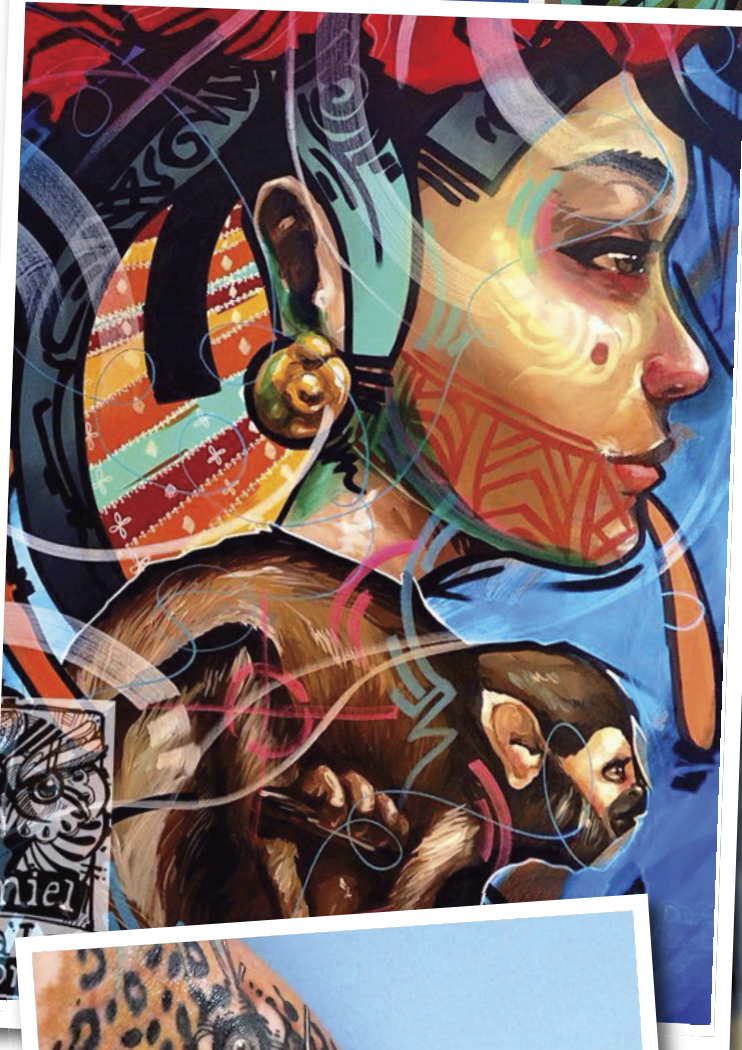
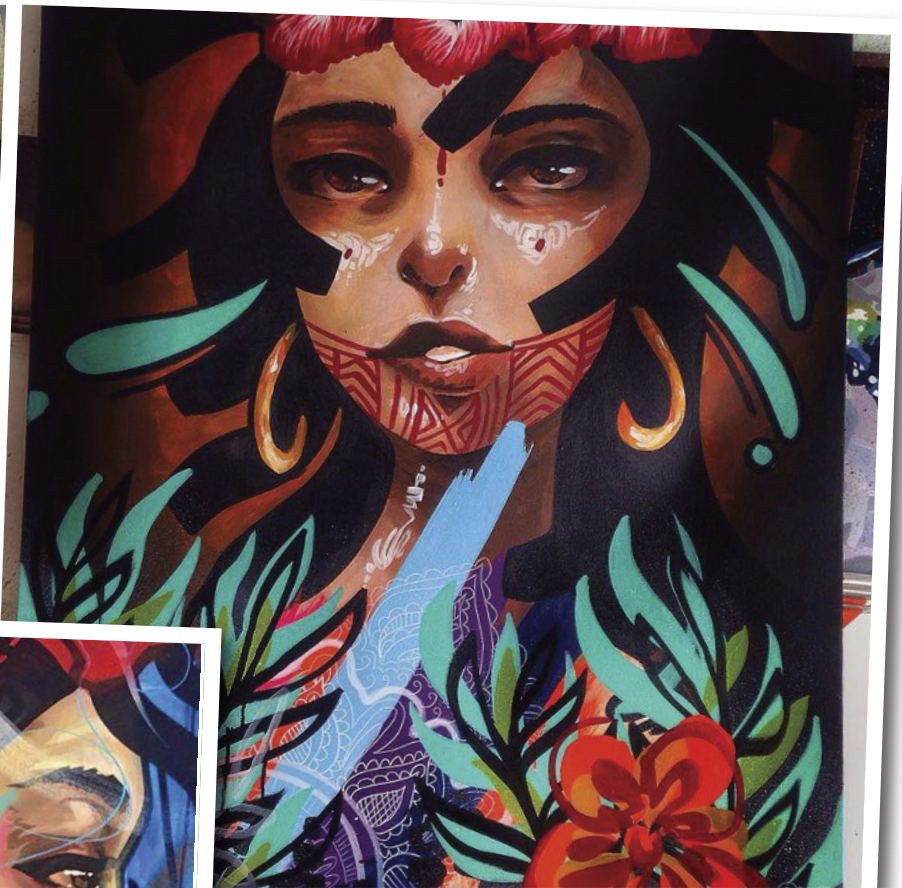
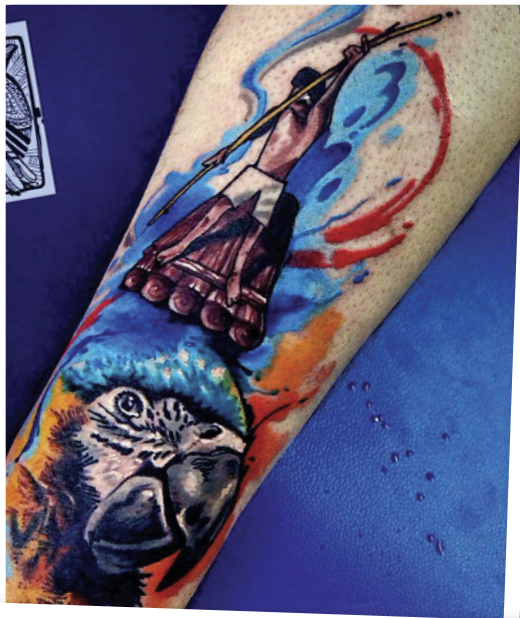
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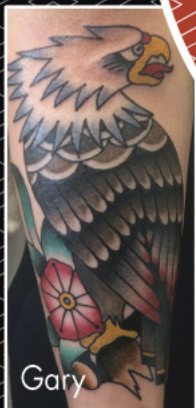
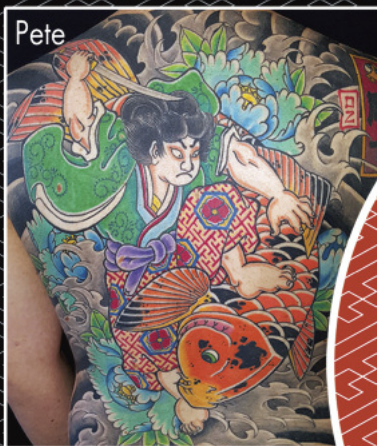
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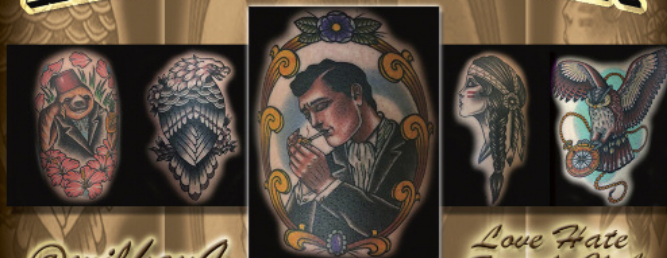


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Simon Lytton

SILVERSMITH ENGRAVER

Words and photos by Perry



I first heard the name Simon Lytton while talking with Richard Pinch from Good Luck Iron (featured in last month's Total Tattoo). Simon is a hand-engraver and, until a recent stroke, was one of the best in the country. There are many similarities between the worlds of engraving and tattooing, so it seemed only natural to hook up with him for a chat.

Simon's love for engraving has its roots in his school days. He chose a jewellery class as an option and loved it. He admits he is not one of life's natural academics so when it came to deciding what he might do at university he pursued his new found passion. "I was lucky enough to go to The Sir John Cass Faculty of Art & Design [part of London Metropolitan University], where I studied jewellery, silversmithing and engraving. I went down there on the off-chance and managed to get an interview for a one-year pre-apprenticeship course. I originally wanted to do standard jewellery making but that course was already full. I was offered engraving with a view to switching after the first term, which of course never happened."





The basics of English scroll



During his time at university, Simon made friends with another student who was on day release from the famous shotgun makers James Purdey & Sons. This proved to be a useful connection. "After my year at college, I phoned Purdey's, who were based behind Paddington station, and they took me on. Nowadays a Purdey gun retails at anything between £80,000 and £200,000. All of them are individually hand-engraved. The standard engraving style used on them is called 'English scroll' but you can specify hunting scenes or custom pieces for an extra cost. I worked at Purdey's for 12 years." Simon is proud to have been a part of such an illustrious institution but he is quick to acknowledge that he was merely a cog in a very large machine. "In the first year I only ever engraved tiny screw heads and slowly I worked my way up."

After he left Purdey's, Simon emigrated. He went first to Canada to work in a small gun factory for about three years, before moving on to America to work with a gun dealer. While in America, a love affair with beautiful hand-made knives developed and he gradually began to do more and more engraving on knives. "In 1986, after the death of my father, I moved back to the UK to help look after my elderly mother. I have never got around to going back to the States."

Inspired by Horiyoshi III



Solid brass skull by Simon





He may not have gone back to the States but travel has played a major part in Simon's life and artistic development. "I used to travel to America, Japan and Europe around a dozen times a year. My style of work was popular because it is 'English scroll' and is very fine compared to the bolder American styles. I went to Japan a couple of times a year to visit knife shows. I noticed that the Japanese love 'Zippo' lighters so I bought 100 sterling silver Zippos and engraved them with different tattoo designs – koi, dragons and warriors – using tattoo books to take inspiration from. I sold every single one of them."

I asked Simon to talk me through the engraving process. "You use a standard lead pencil to draw onto the metal before placing it in a special vice," he told me. "Then you use a hydraulic engraving machine to cut the actual metal." Simon explained that many engravers create 'show plates' on which they do wonderful illustrative designs. They take a mould from this, and cast resin plates to sell at shows and events around the world – in a similar way to tattooists selling prints of their artwork at conventions.



From Simon's private collection



Another similarity between engraving and tattooing is that standards of work and creativity in both arenas seem to be on the rise. Simon believes that the engraving being done around the world now is the best it has ever been. "It is rare for an artform to get better with time. In fine art, we are still looking back to artists like Michelangelo and Rembrandt. Engraving, on the other hand, has just got better and better, especially over the last five years. This is partly because references and inspiration are so much easier to access, and partly because of developments in machine technology.

"I only used hand tools until the early nineties and then I moved on to pneumatic machines. With these, the harder you push, the deeper it cuts into the metal. When used together with an engraver's vice, you only have to turn the vice and not the machine, so it becomes a smooth, coordinated action."

I asked Simon how long a piece may take to complete. "My style of engraving doesn't take too long compared to others. A penknife would usually take me about eight to ten hours. Once you are familiar with the design structure and become proficient with the machinery, it can be quite quick. Someone like Firmo Fricassi, who is probably the best gun engraver in the world, would spend hundreds of hours working in fine detail. Throughout his career, he probably only engraved thirty or so pieces. Some people spend over a year working on one gun. At Purdey's we were given 120 hours to engrave a whole gun.



Rooster claw by Simon



“As a business it can be very good and some engravers are earning decent money. If you visit a trade fair you can usually pick up enough work to keep you busy for a year. I would buy a knife, engrave it to sell at a show and take commissions based on the work I was displaying. At the moment there is a strong fashion for engraved nickels, also known as the ‘hobo’ nickel. I recently enquired about getting one from a Russian friend living in America and he quoted me about \$1000 for a nickel!”

For anyone thinking about engraving as a career, Simon has some sound advice: “In this country I don’t think there is anywhere doing training courses anymore, whereas in America there are a lot of engravers who are now teaching. The GRS Training Center in Kansas have courses, for example. It makes sense that gun engraving would be a bigger business in America than here because of their gun laws. If you are looking to get into engraving, you need to open your horizons and look at working around the world.”



Looking back, Simon acknowledges that his time with Purdey’s could be seen as the pinnacle of his career, although another personal highlight would be working on knives by famous blade masters like Ron Lake, whose pieces now start at about £12,000 for a small folding knife. Simon has owned three of his knives but was unable to hold onto them, such is the demand for them due to the precision and beauty of the workmanship.

Four years ago Simon’s life changed in a devastating way. He suffered a massive stroke that left him unable to engrave and halted his glittering career. “I had two mini strokes but I never really knew about them,” Simon explained. “I woke up one day feeling very tired, had a drink and went back to bed. For a week I was sleeping about 23 hours a day. Over the next eight months things gradually got back to normal and then bang! I had a major stroke. My life just changed over night. Apparently no two strokes are the same. For me, it has affected my right side and my right foot. It hit me from the neck down and so my face was not affected. Unfortunately I engrave with my right hand and so the ability to do that has been lost, but I am nowhere near as badly hit as some people. Sadly we don’t have the resources in this country; as soon as I was able to stand and take a few steps with a stick, I was sent home from hospital, and I sat there for three months while I waited for some follow-up care.”


The stroke had a profound effect on Simon’s life and he doesn’t see himself engraving again for some time. He has, however, deployed his creative talents to other areas and is casting beautiful silver jewellery. “Whether I return to engraving depends on how quickly things improve. If I can carve a niche for myself with the jewellery that I am doing, that should keep me going until things get brighter.”

You can contact Simon through simonlyttonengraver@virginmedia.co.uk





Solid brass skull by Simon

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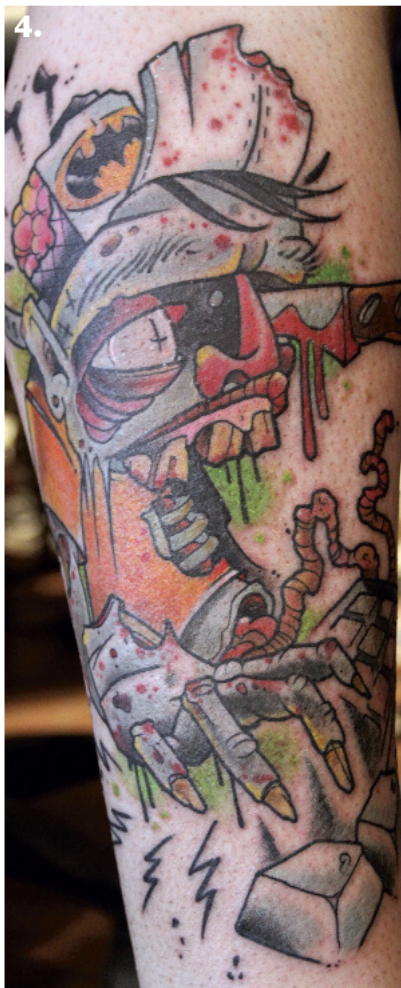
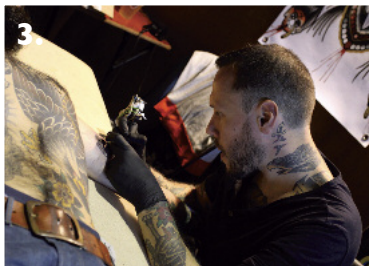
A small tattoo convention on the outskirts of Brugge (aka Bruges) in Belgium, with a hand-picked line-up of artists, all happy to hang out and socialise.

When? Sunday 1st November 2015, 11am - 8pm.

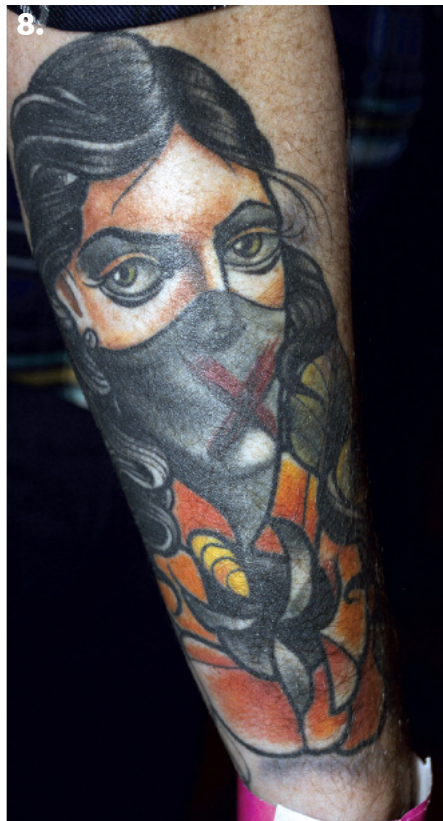
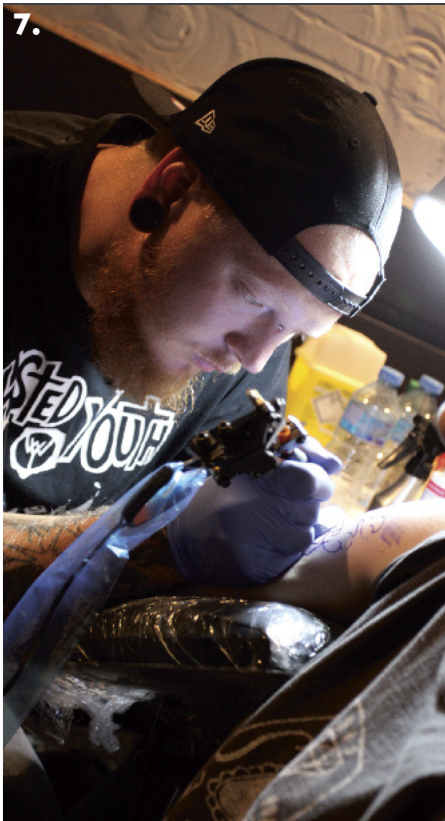
Where? Studio Hall, Boogschutterslaan 41, 8310 Brugge (Sint-Kruis).

How much? €5 entrance (kids under 14 free-of-charge), reasonable bar and booth prices.

Every year it's the same. The show opens at 11am, the artists quickly get booked up (mainly with small one-off pieces), the hall stays quiet until about 2pm then it suddenly fills to capacity. Everyone is manically busy until about 6pm or 7pm, then the place suddenly empties. This show is fast and furious. All the artists are proud to work it, and happy just to be a part of it. There is plenty of work for the artists to do, and many choose to do a few pieces then take time to relax and socialise. This gem of an event is easily accessible from the UK and anywhere in Europe. To miss it is to miss out.

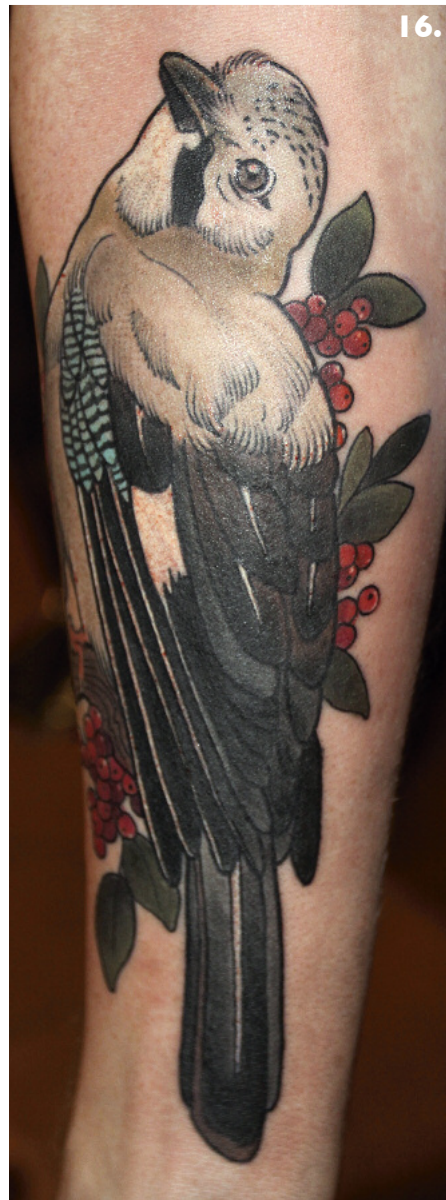


1. andrew mcnally, northside tattooz
2. by amy mymouse, la lanterne rouge
3. guy rubicon (belgium)
4. by stouv, bad bunny (belgium)
5. by dane mancini, inkamatic (italy)
6. by ben mollema, rinto tattoo (holland)
7. dominik dagger, illumination tattoo works (germany)
8. by willem janssem, desperado tattoo (holland)
9. by kris gevens, ton belmans & hange, tequila tattoo (holland)
10. by antoine zr paul, iguana tattoo (belgium)
11. beau redman, blue cardinal



Who was there:

Andre Hoppe, Lifetime Tattoo
Steffen Huiskamp, Lifetime Tattoo
Frank, Lifetime Tattoo
Dominik Dagger, Illumination Tattoo Works
Len Leye, Clan of Tusk
Ben Vervotte, Clan of Tusk
Emily Perla, Clan of Tusk
Neal Bridson, Cult Classic
Aaron Hewitt, Cult Classic
Alix Ge, AlixTattoo
Amy MyMouse, La Lanterne Rouge
Imme Bohme, The Sinner and The Saint
Osti, The Sinner and The Saint
Igor, Lionheart
Christian DR, Lionheart
Jorre, Black Lotus
Lewis Parkin, Northside Tattoo
Andrew McNally, Northside Tattoo
Flo, Times of Grace
Sebastian Kraft, Empire Tattoo
Vinnie Stones, SinSin Tattoo
Ben Mollema, Rintos Tattoo
Myles Vear, Fudoshin
Steve Morante, Fudoshin
Guy, Rubicon Tattoo
Justin Dekan, Suzan Grimm
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Maartje, Skinbonesandink
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Ken, Tattoo Pip
Sydney Mahy, Grizzly Inc
Mr P, Manouche Caravane
Ramona, InkLady
Gert, Karots Tattoo
JP Burton, Purple Sun
Vanessa, Toryumon
Daf, La Main Bleue
Leny, La Main Bleue
Renko, La Main Bleue
Yonmar, La Main Bleue
Antoine, Iguana Tattoo
Steff, Ace's Tattoo
Jon, Ultimat Art
Briko, Briko Tattoo
Stouv, Bad Bunny Tattoo
Buff, Bridge Street
 Pirate Piercing
 ...and Total Tattoo Magazine.



12-15. by anrijs straume, bold as brass
 16. by alix ge, alix ge tattoo (france)
 17. by greg briko, briko tattoo (france)
 18. by lewis parkin, northside tattoooz
 19. by andrew mcnelly, northside tattoooz

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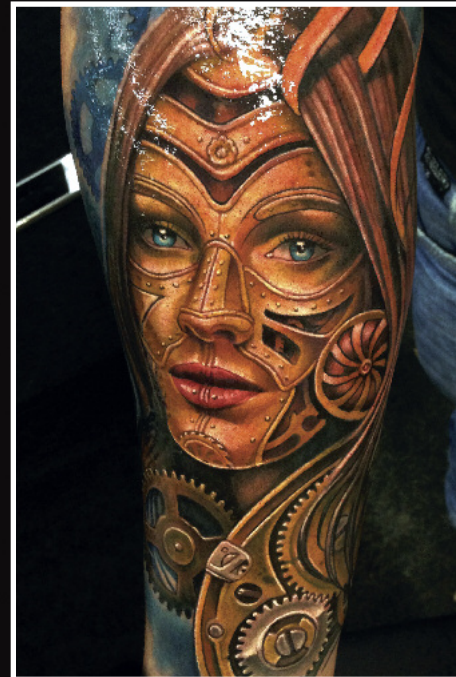
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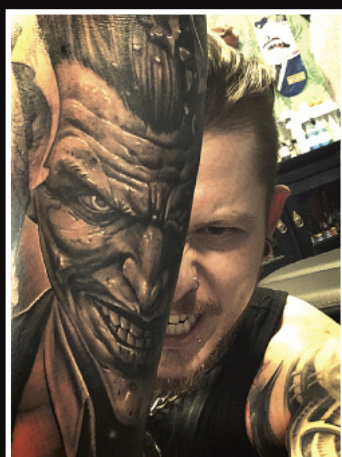
I AM NOT A FOLLOWER
OF TRENDS.
I AM WHAT I AM.





JULIAN SIEBERT CORPSEPAINTER Tattoo

Interview by Travellin' Mick
Photos by Corpsepainter



Julian of Corpsepainter Tattoo in Munich could be seen as the archetypal modern tattoo star: young, ambitious and with a good head for business. But Julian is far from a shallow 'rock star' kind of artist. He works extremely hard to maximise his natural talent and is mature beyond his 28 years. He began tattooing almost as a kind of therapy following a near-death experience. As a result of a serious car crash, he'd been in a coma for several months and it was after recovering from this that he decided to go all out and try to make it. His old school apprenticeship in a renowned Munich studio was truly challenging, but things then fell into place and his next boss supported him when he decided to go solo and open his own studio. Magazine features, conventions and a bunch of trophies soon followed. The crowning glory came in September 2015 when he won Best of Show at the legendary London convention with a simply jaw-dropping tattoo. We talked to him soon after that triumph...

Travellin' Mick: Julian, you set up your own studio quite early on in your career. How did that come about, and why is it called Corpsepainter?

Julian Siebert: During my apprenticeship I matured much faster than I ever anticipated, and I became a fighter. It couldn't have been any worse than what I had been through, so I just went for it! 'Corpse' expresses my passion for horror movies and their soundtracks, and a 'painter' is what I am striving to be, creating art for eternity.

TM: You are considered one of the world's leading experts in bio-mech tattoos. Why this style?

JS: I love anatomy and creating a flow of art on the body. It's not just bio-mech that does this; Japanese artists do a similar thing, just with very different images. I am not a follower of trends, you know. I am what I am. I get inspired by other people's work but I try not to copy anyone in particular. And I don't want to be put into a corner; I want to remain flexible in my creativity.



TM: Your working style looks extremely powerful. Do you prefer coil or rotary machines for that?

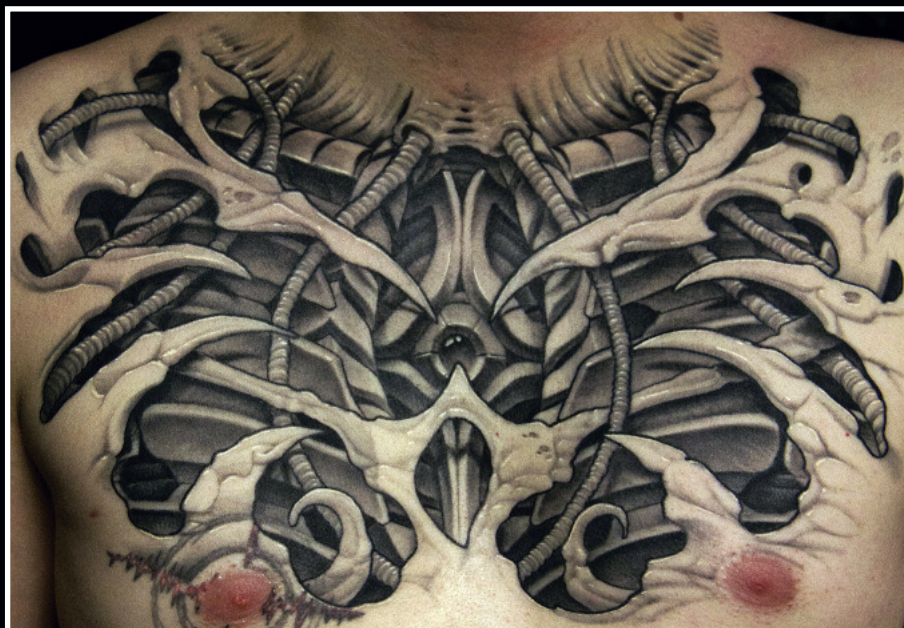
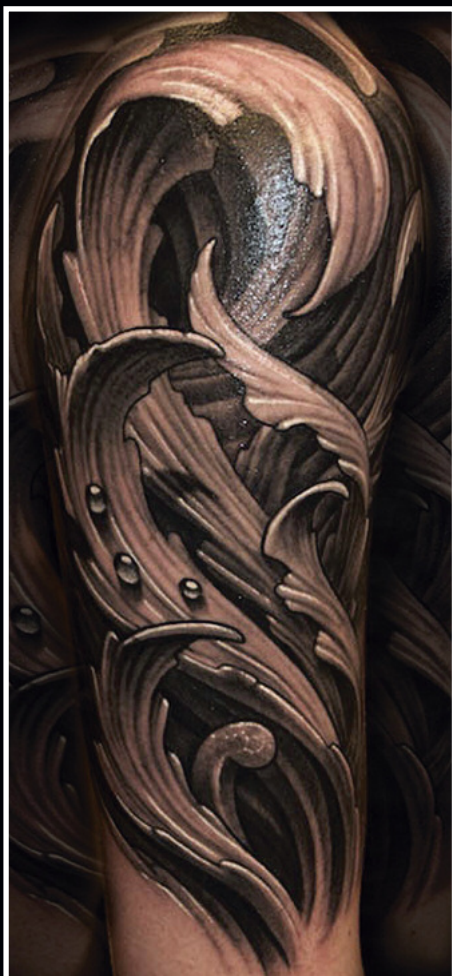
JS: I learned on coils and used them for about five years. I can take them apart and reassemble them blindfolded, and I even know how to solder needles myself. But nowadays I really don't feel like fixing my equipment all the time. My Cheyenne hasn't let me down once in three years. You know, I'd like to drive a nice vintage car occasionally, but for racing, I'd prefer a high-tech vehicle: doesn't turn heads, but runs much better!

TM: Do you prefer to work in colour or black and grey?

JS: A bit of everything. In between all those sinister, dark, or even sad images, I might suddenly feel like doing a happy, pink Arielle or Alice, so I'll do that. Just evil or just cute? Who wants to do the same thing all the time!

TM: How would you describe your creative process?

JS: 30% reference and 70% imagination. And I listen to what my clients say. Being a tattooist involves fulfilling other people's wishes, not just surfing on your own ego.





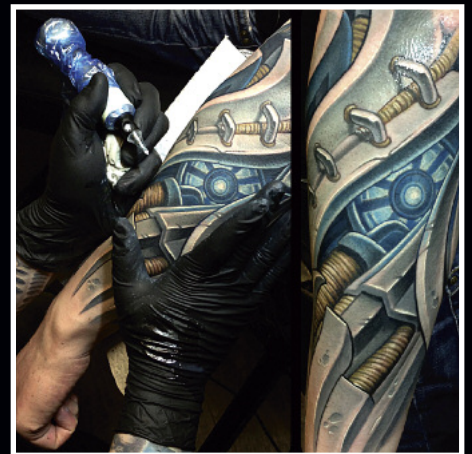
TM: What do you think about the role social media plays in the tattoo scene? Does someone's career largely depend on how good they are at using Photoshop and Instagram?

JS: An excellent tattooist recently told me that a million followers on Instagram is worth as much as a million dollars in Monopoly. Of course it's good to be able to promote your own work and send it out to the world, but one mustn't forget that about 90% of tattoo posts show fresh pieces that are almost always manipulated in some way. This creates a false image of tattooing and the durability of the work. A few years ago, if someone showed you a bad tattoo, you could say 'Why didn't you do your homework first?' Now, clients assume that 180 thousand followers can't be wrong. Well, they actually can!

TM: You are part of a generation that has the opportunity to get very good, very fast at a very young age. Why do you think this is, and do you see any potential downsides to this?

JS: Well, the funny thing is at 28, I am one of the older guys! It's all because of social media, TV shows and football players, but we are neglecting to teach people what is really behind a good tattoo: years of studying and experience to achieve a tattoo that works on the body and will look good in ten years time or more.





TM: This year was your first time at the London convention, and you won Best of Show. An incredible feat!

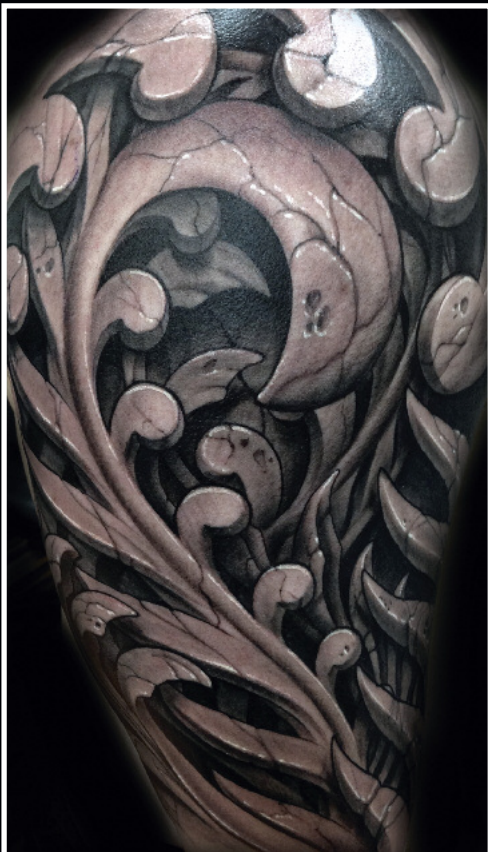
JS: To be honest, I had a hunch I could do it and my client did too. I never really gave a thought to the trophy though. We just wanted to finish the tattoo. It took 24 hours, spread over three days. I hoped it would make the Top Ten to show it on stage, but winning? No way!

TM: How do you pick a design for a tattoo like this?

JS: Portraits aren't considered special enough nowadays, so it had to be a custom-made design. Something simple yet extraordinary. I even bought a real skull to study light, angles and proportions!

TM: How did you and your client make it through those gruelling three days? Were there moments when you doubted you'd finish?

JS: The second day, 2pm. My client nearly broke down because of the pain and I could hardly cope with the pressure, the time limitation and the attention. He was in tears but insisted we go through with it. We did another seven hours that day. He is one tough nut, I tell you! The strongest guy I ever met.





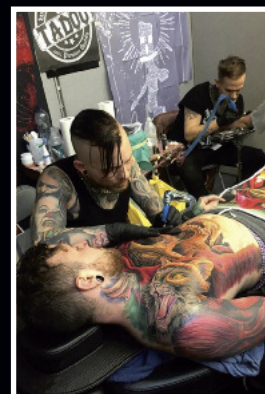
TM: How did he prepare for the ordeal?

JS: We only used a bit of numbing cream, once the skin was completely open. Tattooing for 24 hours under the influence of lidocaine isn't good for the body. He took Arnica Globuli for a few days to keep any inflammation down, and one to two Ibuprophen 600mg per day.

TM: Were there any problems with the healing afterwards? Do you think you will have to retouch it?

JS: It's unbelievable but the tattoo has healed completely. No scabs, everything is still there. He was only a bit tired the next day, but no other problems.

Julian's website:
www.corpsepainter.com

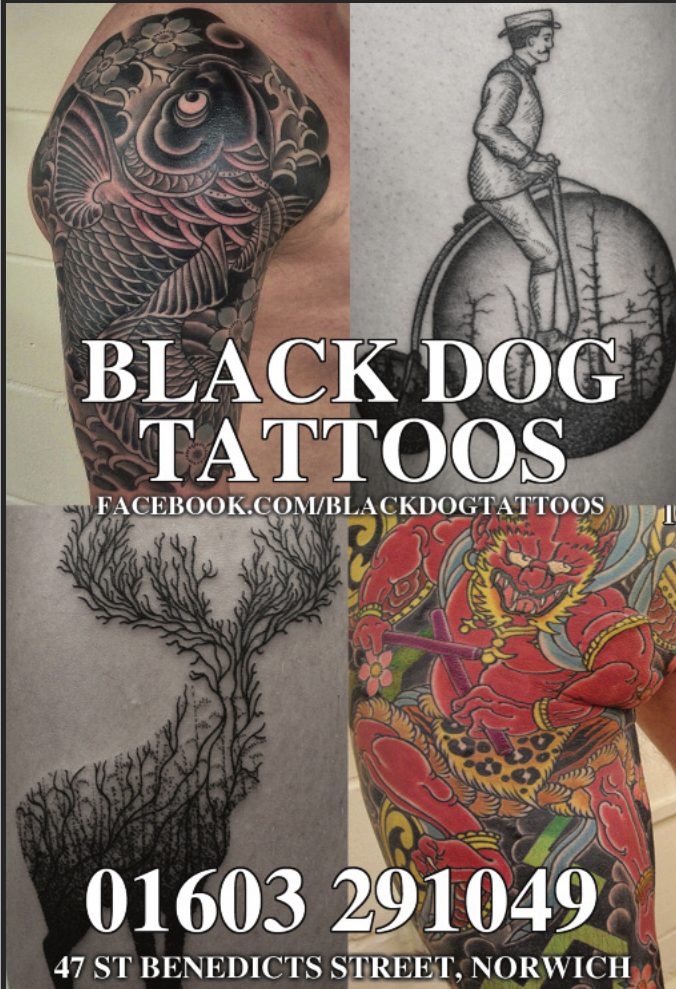


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MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR

IN FOCUS

In these pages we showcase a small selection of work from a group of artists working together.
 This month **Bluefire. 192b Chingford Mount Road, London E4 9BS**
Tel 020 8529 5885. www.bluefiredtattoo.com
 We would love to feature your work, please send examples to:
In Focus, Total Tattoo Magazine, 111 Furze Road, Norwich, NR7 0AU, UK

Sam



Sam



?? Dan, Geoff, James, Sam (front)



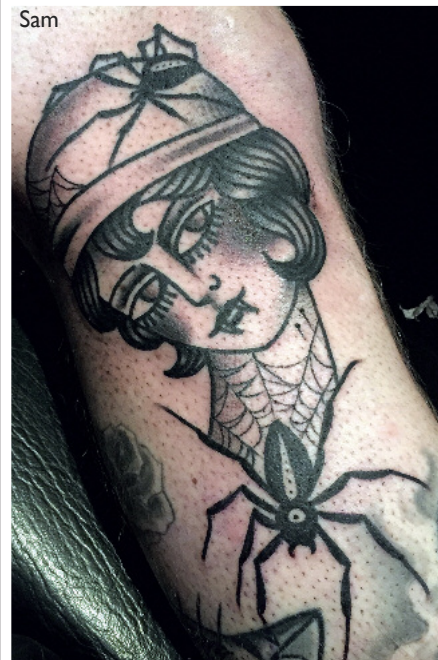
James



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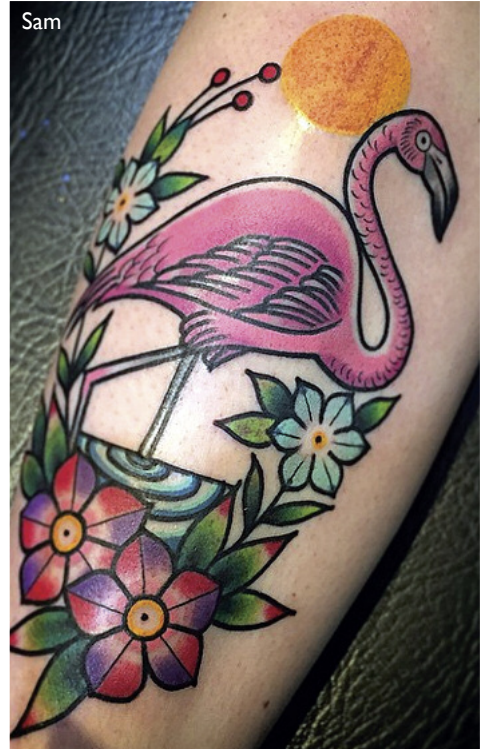
James



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Sam



CONVENTION CALENDAR

UK CONVENTIONS

February 5-6 Needle Gangstas Annual Beano

Pride Pkwy, Derby DE24 8XL
www.tattooteaparty.co.uk

March 5-6 The Tattoo Tea Party

Phoenix Way, Off Barton Dock Road, Urmston
Manchester. M41 7TB
www.facebook.com/needlegangstsa

March 26-27 The Scottish Tattoo Convention

Edinburgh Corn Exchange
10 Market Road, Edinburgh, EH14 1RJ
www.scottishtattooconvention.net

April 3 Ink and Iron Tattoo Convention

The New Bingley Hall
1 Hockley Circus, Birmingham, West Midlands B18 5PP
www.inkandiron.co.uk

April 31-1 May The Brighton Centre

King's Rd, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 2GR
blog.brightontattoo.com

May 6-8 Liverpool Tattoo Convention

Britannia Adelphi Hotel, Ranelagh Place, Liverpool. L3 5UL
www.liverpooltattooconvention.com

June 4-5 Northampton tattoo Convention

The Northampton Saints Rugby Ground
Weedon Road, Northampton. NN5 5BG.
www.northamptoninternationaltattooconvention.com

June 4-5 Scarborough Tattoo Show

The Spa Scarborough, South Bay, Scarborough,
North Yorkshire YO11 2HD
www.facebook.com/scarboroughtattooshow

June 4-5 Leeds International Tattoo Convention

Exhibition Centre Leeds, Clarence Dock, Chadwick Street, Leeds LS10 1LT
www.leedstatattooexpo.com

June 11-12

Bristol Tattoo Convention

The Passenger Shed, Brunels Old Station, Station Approach, Bristol BS1 6QH
www.bristoltattooconvention.com

July 29-31

Titanic Tattoo Convention

Titanic Building Belfast
1 Queens Rd, Titanic Quarter, Belfast BT3 9EP,
www.facebook.com/titanic.tattooconventionbelfast14?fref=ts

July 23-24

Cardiff Tattoo and Toy

Motorpoint Arena Cardiff, Mary Ann Street, Cardiff, CF10 2EQ, GB
www.cardiffattooandtoycon.co.uk

OVERSEAS CONVENTIONS

January 15-17

Goa Tattoo Festival

Tito's White house, Arpora-Siolim road, Anjuna, 403 509 India
www.goatattooefestival.com

March 4-6

Mondial Du Tatouage

Grande halle de la Villette, 211 Avenue Jean Jaurès, 75019 Paris France
www.mondialdutatouage.com/en

April 22-24

Frankfurt Tattoo Convention

Messe Frankfurt, Halle 5.0, Ludwig-Erhard-Anlage 1, 60327 Frankfurt am Main Germany

July 15-17

NY Empire State Tattoo Expo

New York Hilton Midtown, 1335 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10019,
www.empirestatetattooexpo.com

Tattoo Expo Bologna

Unipol Arena
Via Gino Cervi, 2 – Casalecchio di Reno – Bologna
www.tattooexpo.info

Oct 21-23

Evian Tattoo Show

Palais Des Festivités, Evian
www.eviantattoo.com

NEXT MONTH

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LITTLE SWASTIKA

Dancing to the beat of his own drum

JAMES LOVEGROVE

Moving into you

KAROL RYBAKOWSKI

Really Real Realism

On the road with NICK WHYBROW

The third and final part of his European tour

PAUL TALBOT

Tales from the naughty step

A TALE OF TWO EAGLES

Father and son share their experiences

International
Brussels
Tattoo Convention

Plus - ALL THE NEWS AND REVIEWS • CONVENTIONS • THE HALLOWEEN BASH • CONVENTION CALENDAR • OUR GALLERY OF TATTOOS FROM AROUND THE WORLD • IN FOCUS • MUG SHOT



NEXT MONTH

LITTLE SWASTIKA

JAMES LOVEGROVE

KAROL RYBAKOWSKI

A TALE OF TWO EAGLES

'ON THE ROAD' with NICK WHYBROW

PAUL TALBOT

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mugshot

We ask tattooists some probing questions and encourage them to reveal a different side of themselves!

This month

Terry Frank

Electric Punch Tattoo Studio

What makes you happy?

Loads of things. I like to think I am generally happy most of the time. My two boys, Maxwell and Charlie, make me happy. Maxwell is two and a half and he cracks me up with things he comes out with. Carp fishing is also another passion of mine. I definitely like the peace and quiet. And, of course, tattooing. I have been fortunate to work in some awesome studios (and some not so awesome) and I love it.

What makes you angry?

Lateness! Not being punctual will make me lose my shit quicker than anything. I think it's just plain rude. If it's genuinely not someone's fault then that's cool, but some people would be late for their funeral. Also people who drive up your arse; they're wankers as well.

What was the last book you read?

I think the last adult book I read was Bill Bryson's *A Short History of Nearly Everything*. It's a pretty heavy read and I got lost in parts, but there are also some really good facts in it. I would highly recommend it.

What was the last movie you saw?

Blow with Johnny Depp. It's very similar to my life, apart from the drugs, model girls, millions of dollars, carefree lifestyle... mine is more bills, mortgage, two children and shitty nappies, but yeah, other than those things very similar.

What pets do you have?

None. I did have fish until Maxwell started climbing up and getting his hands in the tank, then they had to go. If I were to get another pet I would have a border terrier. I like little scruffy-looking dogs.

What would you eat for your last meal on earth?

Home-cooked Sunday roast with thick gravy and mint sauce. My mouth's watering now!

What's your funniest tattoo story?

Ha ha! Being conned into tattooing my bell-end! The first studio I worked in was a very boisterous street shop and, being keen and eager to tattoo as much as I could, my boss and the other tattooist started telling me how they both had their helmets tattooed. They basically pressured me to do it (which I normally wouldn't entertain). So I turned my back to them, dropped my jeans and then took about an hour to put three lines in it. It's



the only time I've ever felt faint and sick getting tattooed. It then turned out that they were full of shit and hadn't done it! They had a great laugh at my expense but they are still two of my very good friends and I do like a bit of banter.

If you won the lottery what would be the first thing you would buy?

I would buy a nice house with a lake and a garage big enough for the toys. If it was a £10 win though I'd just buy a Twirl chocolate bar and a couple of Costa coffees.

Who would play you in the movie of your life?

I was saying Johnny Depp and my wife just shouted "More like Johnny Vegas"! She does think she is a comedian though.

What would be the soundtrack to your life?

The Libertines *Don't Look Back into the Sun*. It's my number one favourite song of all time.

What achievement are you most proud of?

I have a few things to be proud of: I have my two boys, my own studio which is going from strength to strength, and I also spent 10 years in the army serving on tours of Bosnia and Northern Ireland. I am extremely proud to have served my country in some small way.

What keeps you awake at night?

My new born son Charlie is extremely good at keeping me awake every night. Babies are hard work!



What's your favourite tattoo on yourself?

Wow, that's a tricky question. I have been tattooed by a lot of people. Whose work do I single out, without tipping my hat to all the other tattooists who have worked on me? To save having to choose from professionals, I will say a little skull and cross bones my Mrs did on me when I opened the studio. It's bad but it's also special.



What's your favourite tattoo you have done and why?

There's a few that stand out, and I think during this last year or two my work has really taken a step forward. I would say a koi back piece that I did on Jamie (who is one of my longest-standing customers and now a good friend) is one of my favourites. We did 18 hours of tattooing over three consecutive days to complete it. He sat like an absolute rock. He didn't moan once, didn't move, just took it like a boss. Not many people could endure that.

Finish this sentence: Terry is...

...going to quickly use this opportunity to thank Dave Notley, Duane Cash, Harry Johnson and Naresh Bhana. These guys have helped me, trusted me and advised me a lot over the years and for that I am truly grateful. And also thank you to Total Tattoo for asking me to do this. You are also awesome.

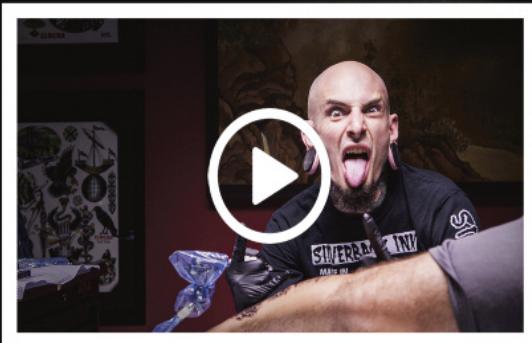
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